2 Dc 16

REFLECTIONS UPON LEARNING;

Wherein is ſhewn the

INSUFFICIENCY

Thereof, in its ſeveral Particulars:

In order to evince the

Uſefulneſs and Neceſſity OF REVELATION.

BRITANNICUM

The EIGHTH EDITION.

By a GENTLEMAN.

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MDCCLVI.

16

MVSEVM
BRITANNICVM

PREFACE.

A Work of this Nature, that would ſo hardly find a Patron, will ſtand the more in need of a Preface. Men that write in Commendation of Learning, uſually ſeek out ſome Great Genius *to prefix to their Book, whom they make an Inſtance of all the Learning and Perfections that are deſcribed in it. Were I to chuſe a Patron conſiſtently with my Deſign, I muſt compliment him with the Weakneſs of his Parts and Shortneſs of his Underſtanding; which is ſuch a Compliment, as I preſume I ſhall willingly be excuſed from. But then a Preface will be the more neceſſary to give an Account of my Undertaking; which is rather to inquire*

into the Abuſes, and to ſhew the Inſufficiency of human Learning, than wholly to diſcredit its Uſe. No Man ever did this without diſparaging his own Underſtanding; nor decryed Learning but for want of it; it having been an old Obſervation, that will hold perpetually, that Knowledge has no Enemies except the Ignorant. An Attempt of this Nature would be utterly impracticable; for either it would be well performed, and then it muſt be done by Reaſons borrowed from the Stores of Learning; by which means, by reaſoning againſt Learning, we muſt, at the ſame time, reaſon for it, and all our Arguments muſt return upon us; or if the Performance were unlearned, it would be to no Purpoſe, and might as well be let alone. This then is no Part of my Deſign.

All that I intend is, to take it down from its ſuppoſed Heights, by expoſing

expoſing the Vanity of it in ſeveral Particulars, its Inſufficiency in the reſt, and I believe I might ſay its Difficulties in all: And there is the more need of this in an Age, in which it ſeems to be too much magnified; and where Men are fond of Learning almoſt to the Loſs of Religion. Learning is our great Diana; *nothing will paſs with our Men of Wit and Senſe, but what is agreeable with the niceſt Reaſon; and every Man's Reaſon is his own Underſtanding: For if you examine them to the Bottom, theſe mighty Pretenders have no truer Grounds to go upon than other Men, only they affect a Liberty of judging according to themſelves, and (if they could be allowed it) of making their own Judgment a Standard of Others. They plead for right Reaſon, but they mean their own, and talk of a reaſonable Religion, whilſt their own falſe Notions are miſtaken for it; and while*

they ſeek the Goddeſs, they embrace a Cloud. In the mean time they take us off from our ſureſt Guide; Religion ſuffers by their Contentions about it, and we are in Danger of running into Natural Religion.

Where theſe Things will end, GOD only knows; it is to be ſuſpected they may at laſt end in the Thing we fear, and may bring us about to that Religion for which, of all others, we have the moſt Abhorrence. For after Men have tried the Force of Natural Reaſon in Matters of Religion, they will ſoon be ſenſible of its Weakneſs; and after they have run themſelves out of Breath, and can center no where, they will be glad of any Hold where they think they can find it; and rather than be always wandring, they will take up with an Infallible Guide. *I am unwilling to entertain ſuch hard Thoughts of a neighbouring Church,*

as

as to think they are ſowing Diſcord among us to that Purpoſe; but I much fear we are doing their Work for them, and by our own Diviſions are making way for a Blind Faith and Implicit Obedience: *And may it never be ſaid, That as Learning was one great Inſtrument under GOD, to bring about a Reformation; ſo the Abuſe of it, by the Divine Permiſſion, has brought us back to the ſame Place from whence we came; and that our Enemies have done that by ſecret Engines and domeſtick Diſtractions, which by open Attempts they were never able to do. It is the Senſe of ſuch Dangers and ſuch Abuſes that has drawn from me theſe Reflections, and has inclined me to harder Thoughts, and poſſibly, to ſay harſher Things of ſome Parts of Learning than will be agreeable to the Humour of the Age: And yet if any one who thinks thus of me will only*

ſuſpend his Cenſure ſo long, till I draw my Concluſion, I am willing to hope, that the Goodneſs of the End will atone for the hardeſt Things that ſhall be ſaid in the Book.

I am ſure I am not ſingular in this Deſign: One of the firſt Reſtorers of Letters (a), a Man noted for his Piety as well as Parts, has writ a Book to this Purpoſe; but it having been principally levelled againſt Ariſtotle's *Philoſophy, which is now ſo much out of Credit, that it rather wants an Advocate to defend it, than a new Adverſary to run it down; the Book itſelf is as much out of Uſe as the Philoſophy is, that it deſigns to decry. He was followed in his Deſign by* Lodovicus Vives *(b) in better* Latin, *and with greater Eloquence; but* Vives's *main Talent having been in Philology,*

(a) Pic. Mirand. Exam. Van. Doct. Gent. Op. Vol. II. p. 467.
(b) De Corrupt. Art. Op. Vol. I. p. 221.

logy, and having been leſs converſant in Philoſophical Matters, his Book is both very defective as to the Particulars it treats of, and being ſuited to the ancient Literature, is leſs agreeable to the Genius of our Age. What Cornelius Agrippa *(c) has writ upon this Subject is chiefly declamatory, and fitted for School Boys, than of any juſt Moment or Conſideration in a ſerious Inquiry. And a* French *Book (d) lately publiſhed upon the ſame Subject, and with the ſame Title, tho' well and piouſly writ, yet has nothing in it of what I expected; and is rather a Sermon, than a Treatiſe of* Science. *None of theſe Authors, nor any other I have met with, have come up full yet to my Purpoſe; nor have I been able to borrow much Help from them; where I have, I have quoted them; and if in any other Things we happen to agree, without remembring them, it is a*

(c) Devan-Scient.
(d) La vanité des Sciences, Amſ. 88.

a Fault of Memory; and I make this Acknowledgment once for all.

Sir William Temple, *and Mr.* Wotton, *have turned their Pens the other Way, and have been ſo much taken up with deſcribing the Beauties and Excellencies of Learning, as to have leſs Occaſion to diſcover its Faults: Tho' it was ſcarce poſſible, whilſt they croſſed one another's Opinion, either to commend Ancient Learning, without entring into the Defects of the Modern; or to prefer the Moderns, without cenſuring the Ancients; ſo that by Conſequence, tho' not profeſſedly, they have fallen into this Controverſy. I have, as far as poſſible, avoided ſaying any thing that has been obſerved by them already, (though perhaps this may be thought my Fault, and I may thereby have ſaid worſe Things of my own;) and if in any other Things I have contradicted*

dicted them, I have done it in ſo tender a Manner, as neither of them could blame, were they yet both living. I have treated all Men with Decency and Reſpect, except Monſ. Le Clerc, *who has not deſerved ſuch Treatment. I have ſeen little of Monſ.* Perault, *and a conſiderable Part both of his and Mr.* Wotton's *Book, come not within my Account of Learning; for I have nothing to ſay to Sculpture, Painting, Architecture, Gardening, Agriculture,* &c. *which I take to be more properly of Mechanical Conſideration. But if Learned Men will needs include theſe likewiſe within the Compaſs of Learning, it ſhall give me no Diſturbance: The Bounds of Learning are of late wonderfully enlarged, and for aught I know, Mr.* H's *Trade-Papers may paſs in Time for a Volume of Learning.*

Not

Not that there is any need of ſwelling the Account; for Learning is already become ſo voluminous, that it begins to ſink under its own Weight; Books crowd in daily, and are heaped upon Books, and by the Multitude of them both diſtract our Minds, and diſcourage our Endeavours. Thoſe that have been writ upon Ariſtotle, *are almoſt innumerable: In a very few Centuries, from* Albertus Magnus, *till a ſhort time after* Luther, *there have been Twelve Thouſand Authors, that have either commented upon his Books, or followed him in his Opinions. This we have from good Authority, though the Author that reports and cenſures it, had ſurely forgot, that he himſelf has ſtrengthened the Objection, by publiſhing a groſs Volume, only to give an Account of* Ariſtotle, *his Writings, and Followers (e). But however their Number may*

(e) V. Pr. Partic. Diſcuſ. Peripat. l. 10. p. 145. Baſ. Flo.

may be in the Old Philoſophy, I believe we may reckon, by a modeſt Computation, that ſince that Time to ours, we may have had double the Number of Authors in the New; which tho' ſome may look upon as an Argument of Learned Times; for my part I have quite different Thoughts of Things, and muſt needs eſteem it the great Miſchief of the Age we live in, and cannot but think we ſhould have more Learning, had we fewer Books.

I have notwithſtanding adventured to throw in one to the Account, but it is a very ſmall one, and writ with an honeſt Deſign of leſſening the Number: I propoſe neither Credit nor Advantage, (for I hope to take effectual Care to be in the Dark:) If I may do ſome little Service to Religion, and no Diſſervice to Learning, I have my End. I am inclined to hope the Treatiſe may be of ſome Uſe, as an Hiſtorical Account,

count, in obſerving the Defects, and marking the Faults that are to be avoided by Beginners; and, poſſibly, it may afford ſome Hints to wiſer Men. As it is, I offer it to the Publick; if it proves uſeful, I ſhall have much Satisfaction in myſelf; and if otherwiſe, I ſhall be very willing to be made a freſh Inſtance of that which I intend to prove, The Weakneſs of Human Underſtanding.

CON-

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R E-

REFLECTIONS

UPON

LEARNING.

CHAP. I.

SINCE I first begun to think, I have always had a mean Opinion of two things, Human Understanding, and Human Will. The Weakneſs of the latter is a confeſſed thing; we all of us feel it, and moſt Men complain of it; but I have ſcarce yet met with any, that would own the Weakneſs of his

Underſtanding; and yet they both ſpring from the ſame corrupt Fountain: And the ſame Cauſe, that has derived Contagion upon the Will, has ſpread Darkneſs upon the Underſtanding, and however Men may pleaſe themſelves with an Opinion of their own Wiſdom, it is plain, the wiſeſt Men know little; and they that are fulleſt of themſelves, and boaſt the higheſt, do uſually ſee leaſt, and are only wiſe for want of thinking.

We have had a mighty Controverſy of late betwixt the Old and New Philoſophers, and great Inquiry has been made, whether the Preference is to be given to the Ancient or Modern Learning: For my Part I will not venture to engage in ſo warm a Controverſy; but it's ſome Argument to me, that we have not overmuch of the thing, otherwiſe we ſhould know better where to find it; and if I would ſay any thing, I ſhould be of Opinion, that neither Side has reaſon to boaſt. What the Wiſdom of the Ancients was, is not ſo eaſily known at this Diſtance; by

by thoſe Specimens of it that are left us, it does not appear to have had any thing in it very extraordinary, or which might not be attained to by their Poſterity, without ſtanding upon their Shoulders. Have not ſome Dark and Oracular Expreſſions been eſteem'd enough to entitle a Man to the Reputation of Wiſdom? And was not any odd, and ſometime extravagant, Opinion, if ſubtilely maintained, ſufficient to ſet a Man at the Head of a Party, and make him the Author of a Sect of Philoſophers? The moſt Ancient Philoſophy was uſually wrapt up and involv'd in Symbols and Numbers, which, as far as they can be explain'd, do not contain any thing very myſterious; but it was the Intereſt of theſe Great Men to keep a Diſtance, and be always in the Clouds, that they might be thought profound, and procure a Veneration by the Obſcurity of their Writings. They that have writ more plainly, have (at leaſt ſome of them) been plain to an Objection, and have ſaid little more, than what good Senſe, improv'd

by Obſervation and Thought, would ſuggeſt to moſt Men without Reading. To ſay nothing here of the vaſt Variety of Opinions amongſt them, which will fall in more properly in the Thread of my Diſcourſe; they did not agree in the firſt *Criterions* of Truth, which they have made as many and as different as could poſſibly be thought of; and carried their Differences ſo far, that it put the *Sceptick* pretty early upon doubting of every thing, and at laſt brought them to deny that there was any ſuch thing as Truth in the World.

THE Moderns have not yet gone ſo far, but they have made ſome Advances, and ſeem, by pretty eaſy Conſequences, to be leading us towards it: For ſince *Ariſtotle*'s Philoſophy has been exploded in the Schools, under whom we had more Peace, and poſſibly almoſt as much Truth as we have had ſince, we have not been able to fix any where, but have been wavering from one Opinion to another. The Platonick Philoſophy was firſt

firſt introduced with the Greek Learning, and wonderfully obtain'd for ſome time, among the Men of polite Letters; but however Divine it might ſeem at firſt, and for that Reaſon was entertain'd more favourably, it was found upon a ſhort Trial to lead to Hereſy, and ſo went off again under a Cloud. The Moderns were now wiſe enough to ſet up for themſelves, and were more pleas'd with their own Inventions, than with the dry Syſtems of the Old Philoſophers. Several Attempts were made unſucceſsfully; nor had they ſet out long or done much, till they had run themſelves into ſuch a Maze, that *M. Des Cartes* thought it neceſſary to ſit down and doubt, whether they were not all out of the way: His Doubts increaſed upon him by doubting, and he muſt have continu'd under them, had he not by a ſtrange Turn of Thought ſtruck Evidence out of Uncertainty; for he found ſuch Strength and Conviction in doubting, that he brings an Argument from it to prove a firſt Truth, The Reality of his own Exiſtence: He likewiſe borrowed

great Light from *Ideas*, which have been ſince improv'd, by comparing their Agreement and Diſagreement with one another, and with the Reality of Things: And ſince that Conformity has not been evident enough, we have been conſulting the *Divine* λόγος or *Ideal World*, to fetch thence more perfect *Ideas*, and are at laſt come to ſee all things in GOD; a Way which, could it be as eaſily made out, as it is aſſerted, I do not ſee, what we could deſire further; for we ſhall hardly ſee more clearly in a State of Glory: But all theſe Particulars we ſhall meet with, as we go along.

WHAT has been ſaid of Philoſophy is true in other ſorts of *Learning*; and however we may be puffed up with vain Conceits, and may flatter ourſelves with Diſcoveries of *New Worlds* of *Learning*, and fancy there is little hid from the profound Search and accurate Inquiries of ſo learned an Age; to me it ſeems we are yet much in the Dark, that many of our Diſcoveries are purely imaginary, and that the

the State of *Learning* is ſo far from Perfection, much more from being the Subject of Oſtentation, that it ought to teach us Modeſty, and keep us humble. To this end, I propoſe to trace it in its ſeveral Branches; and were the Management of my Argument anſwerable to the Truth of it, I ſhall not doubt of giving Satisfaction to impartial Readers.

CHAP. II.

Of LANGUAGE.

LANGUAGES being the *Channels* by which moſt of our Learning is convey'd, it is neceſſary to the attaining of Knowledge, that theſe ſhould be kept clear and open; if the Streams in theſe run muddy, or are corrupted, all the Knowledge that is convey'd by them muſt be obſcure. Words at the beſt are no very certain Signs of Things; they are liable to Ambiguity, and under that Ambiguity, are often ſubject to very different Meanings; and tho' this, as far as it is the common Condition of Speech, muſt be ſubmitted to, and is no Objection in plain Laws and eaſy Precepts, that are intelligible enough in any Language; yet in Matters

Matters of ſcience, it is much otherwiſe; theſe are nice things; the ſtrict Meaning is to be obſerv'd in them; nor can we miſtake a Word without loſing the Notion.

THE firſt Language, the *Hebrew*, was very plain and ſimple, (a good Argument of its being an Original) conſiſting of few Roots, and thoſe very ſimple and uncompounded: It ſeems fitted for the purpoſe for which it was deſign'd, which was not ſo much to improve Mens Knowledge, as to better their Lives; and this End it did perfectly anſwer: Indeed the Ancient Tongues are generally the moſt uncompounded, and conſequently more plain and eaſy; but then, whilſt Things continued thus, as Languages were eaſy, ſo they were defective, and therefore as from Neceſſity Men were put upon improving Speech; ſo particularly as Arts increaſed, Languages grew up with them, and Men were put upon coining new Words to expreſs the new *Ideas* they had of Things. This has enlarged the

the Bounds of Language, and ſwoln it to ſuch a Height, that its Redundancy is now a greater Inconvenience, than the Defectiveneſs of it was before.

THE Inconveniencies from Languages are chiefly two: *Firſt*, Their Variety: And *Secondly*, Their Mutability, 1. Were there only one Language in the World, Learning would be a much eaſier thing, than it now is; Men might then immediately apply to Things, whereas now a great part of our Time is ſpent in Words, and that with ſo little Advantage, that we often blunt the Edge of our Underſtanding, by dealing with ſuch rough and unpleaſant Tools: For however apt Men may be to overvalue the Tongues, and to think they have made a conſiderable Progreſs in Learning, when they have once overcome theſe, yet in reality there is no internal Worth in them, and Men may underſtand a thouſand Languages without being the wiſer, unleſs they attend to the Things that they deliver: It is in order to this that they are to be learnt, and it

is

is the hard Condition of Learning, that in this reſpect, it cannot be without them: This Labour muſt neceſſarily be devour'd in our Way to Knowledge, and every Man muſt dig in this Mine, that hopes to be Maſter of the Treaſure it conceals; much Droſs is to be ſeparated, and many Difficulties to be overcome.

WHEN I ſpeak of the Variety of Languages, I do not mean that all of them are neceſſary, at leaſt not to all ſorts of Learning; were this our Caſe, we could have few compleat Scholars: But tho' all of them be not neceſſary, yet ſome of them are allow'd to be ſo, particularly ſuch as are ſtiled Learned; and there is ſuch a Connexion amongſt moſt Tongues of the ſame kind, that it is hard to excel in any one, without ſome tolerable Skill in the reſt. This is pretty plain in the *Greek* and *Latin*, and the Reaſon is clearer in the Eaſtern Tongues, where the Affinity is greater. Two of the Languages that in their different kinds pretend to moſt Learning, (I do not here inquire, how

how truly) are the *Arabic* and *Greek*; and it happens not well, that theſe two are the moſt copious and difficult. They that have Skill *(a)* in the firſt, aſſure us, that it abounds in Synonimous Words, that it has five hundred Words for a Lion, and almoſt a thouſand for a Sword, which are enough to make an intire Language; and almoſt as many as all the Radicals in the *Hebrew* Tongue. And as for the *Greek*, which is unconteſtedly Learned, moſt know how copious it is; for tho' its *Radicals* are not ſo many as might be imagined, which ſome have computed not much to exceed three thouſand, *(b)* yet this is abundantly made up in its Compoſitions, and however ſimple it may be in its *Roots*, it ſpreads very widely in its Branches: If we add to this, its many different Dialects, and all the various Inflections of Nouns and Verbs, which diverſify Words, and diſtinguiſh them from themſelves; this will ſwell the Account much higher, and make it almoſt an infinite thing. So that what from the Variety of Languages, and the

(a) *W. Wal. Prolog.* 14. §. 6.

(b) *Wilk. R. Ch. cap. ult.*

Copia

Copia of thoſe that are reputed learned, one great Obſtruction lies in the Way of Learning.

THE other Inconvenience is from their Mutability; for whatever their Number may be, yet were their Nature fix'd, and their Condition ſtated, the Meaſures that are taken from them might be more ſteady; but when to the Multitude of them, we add their Mutability, we are ſtill under greater Difficulties. Words, like other things, are ſubject to the common Fate of Viciſſitude and Change; they are always in Flux, ebbing and flowing, and have ſcarce any fix'd Period: For being govern'd by Cuſtom, which itſelf depends upon one of the moſt unconſtant things in the World, the Humour of the People, it is ſcarce poſſible it ſhould be otherwiſe: No Prince ever gave Laws to theſe. *Cæſar*, who gave Laws to *Rome*, could give none to its Language; and it was look'd upon as the height of Flattery in that Sycophant, that offer'd to compliment him with ſuch an extravagant Power; in this,

this, Cuſtom is only abſolute. We can ſcarce have a better Inſtance of this, than in the Tongue we are now ſpeaking of, the *Latin:* That Language that was ſpoke ſoon after the Foundation of *Rome*, was perfectly unintelligible in the Age of *Auguſtus*; nay, ſome hundred Years after that Period, and not 150 before *Cicero*'s Time, the Tongue, that was then Vulgar, can hardly now be underſtood without a Comment. This is evident from the Inſcription upon the *Columna Roſtrata*, that is yet in being, and a Copy of which has been given us by Biſhop *Walton (c)*. In *Cicero*'s Age, that Tongue was in its full height; it had been growing up till then, ever after it was declining, and had only one ſhort Stage of Perfection. They that came after were obſerv'd to write with ſome Mixture; even *Livy* had his *Patavinity*, which is moſt probably underſtood of a Tincture from his Country Education.

(c) *Prolog. p.* 5.

SUCCESSIVELY on, they were more corrupt; *Paterculus*, *Seneca*, &c. ſtill writ

writ with a greater Mixture; till at laſt, either by mixing with foreign Nations, in ſending Colonies, or by the breaking in of barbarous People upon them, the Language ſunk into Decay, and became utterly barbarous.

THE *Greek Tongue* had the ſame Fortune with the *Latin*, tho' it continued Vulgar longer; for as *Greece* did aſſiſt the *Romans*, in giving Perfection to their Speech, (they having not begun to cultivate Arts, or poliſh their Language, till they had ſubdu'd *Greece*) ſo they receiv'd a great Tincture and Corruption from their Conquerors; either firſt, when they became an Acceſſion to their Empire, as appears from thoſe that writ in that Tongue after the Reduction of *Greece*; or after, when the Empire was tranſlated to *Conſtantinople*, and that City became new *Rome*, and the Seat of the Empire. From that time the *Greeks* ſunk apace, as muſt needs be expected, where the *Latin* was the Court Language, and made uſe of in their Laws and Courts of Judicature;

cature; and the *Greek* in a manner confin'd to the Vulgar. In *Juſtinian*'s Time, who was not very long after *Conſtantine*, it is plain, it was much corrupted, as is evident from the *Acts* of the Councils of theſe Times, and the Acclamations of the People and Clergy on ſuch Occaſions; Inſtances whereof are given by *Du Freſne*, in his learned Preface to his *Greek Gloſſary* (d). As we deſcend lower, the Corruption is greater, as is ſhewn by the ſame learned Perſon: The Reduction of *Conſtantinople* by the *Franks*, was one other great Blow; the laſt and fatal Stroke was given by that Deluge of Barbariſm, in the Inundation of the *Turks*, who bore down all before them. What the Condition of it now is, may be ſeen in *Cruſius* (e), whence will appear not only the preſent corrupt State of that Tongue, but alſo the Reaſons from which it proceeds, either from the Mixture of the *Latin*, the *Turco-Arabic*, and other foreign Tongues; or by dividing Words that ſhould be conjoin'd, or running two Words into one, that ſhould be divided; or by other Faults in

(d) §. 7.

(e) *Turco-græc.* p. 92. 224. *&c.*

in *Orthography*, that is now in great Neglect among them. And what is moſt melancholy in the Account, is, that even at *Athens*, that was once renowned for Learning and Eloquence, their Tongue is now more corrupt and barbarous, than in any other Part of *Greece*; to that degree, as is there taken notice of, that it would draw Tears from any one to obſerve *(f)* the miſerable Change. In all Parts of *Greece*, their Speech is ſo far degenerated from its ancient Purity, that as a learned *Greek* cannot thoroughly underſtand the modern Vulgar Tongue, much leſs is the ancient *Greek* underſtood by the Moderns.

(f) Ib. p. 99.

Now under this great Multiplicity, as well as Change, what Difficulties are we to ſtruggle with, and what Uncertainties are to be overcome? Our Words are ſo many, and ſo uncertain, that there is both great Difficulty in becoming Maſters of them, and after that, in fixing and determining their Senſe. We are to trace them up to their firſt Originals, and afterwards to purſue them down to their laſt Decay, to

mark their ſeveral Times and Periods; in all which they much vary, and are often capable of different Meanings, or their true Meaning is very obſcure. There is only one Way of coming at their Meaning, after they become dead Languages, and ceaſe to be Vulgar, by the Books that have been writ in them: But beſides the Want we are in of ſome of theſe, and Defects in thoſe we have, tho' they might ſerve well enough for common Ends and Uſes; yet the Things we are now inquiring after, are Matters of *Science*, which are abſtruſe Things, and not ſo eaſy to be expreſs'd in ſuch proper Terms, as are not liable to be miſunderſtood: Such particularly are Terms of Art, that muſt needs be obſcure, as being too comprehenſive, and taking in more Notions than one, under the ſame Word: Which tho' of good Uſe, as being deſign'd to make Knowledge more compendious, yet have frequently turned the other Way, by requiring large Comments, that have been often writ upon a ſingle Word, and perhaps after all, have left it more doubtful than it was before.

DICTI-

DICTIONARIES indeed have been call'd in to our Aſſiſtance, which have been compil'd with much Pains and in great Plenty, not only for Words, but for Sciences and Arts; but beſides the no great Agreement that is among them, they are ſwoln to ſuch a Height, and become ſo numerous, that thoſe very Books, that were deſign'd as Helps, now breed Confuſion, and their Bulk and Number is become a Burthen. Such alone as have been compos'd for the *French Tongue* (which as yet is no learned Language, though it bids pretty fair for it) would fill a Library; and only one of thoſe, and that not the largeſt, has been the Work of forty Years, tho' it was carried on by the united Labours of the *French* Academy; after all which Care, it has not eſcaped Cenſure, but has been thought to want Correction; and does thereby ſhew how impoſſible it is to ſet Bounds, or give a Standard to Language, for which Purpoſe it was deſign'd. Not only every Tongue, but every Faculty has met with this Help; *Dictionaries* are become a great Part of Learning, and no-

thing remains, but that as it has fared with *Bibliotheques*, which were grown ſo numerous, that *(g)* a *Bibliotheca Bibliothecarum* was thought a neceſſary Work, ſo Dictionaries ſhould have the like Service done them; a *Dictionarium Dictionariorum* might be a Work of ſome Uſe, I am ſure of great Bulk, and I wonder it has not been yet undertaken.

(g) *V. Ant. Teiſſer. v. Ph. Lab.*

To redreſs and heal all theſe Inconveniences, an univerſal Remedy has indeed been thought of; *a Real Character* and *Philoſophical Language*; a Work that has been purſued of late with great Application, and with ſome Expectation of Succeſs and Advantage: But however plauſible this may ſeem at a diſtance, it is to be fear'd, it is only ſo in the Theory, and that upon Trial, it will be found an impracticable thing. For this Language being deſigned not to expreſs Words but Things, we muſt firſt be agreed about the Nature of Things, before we can fix Marks and Characters to repreſent them, and I very much deſpair of ſuch an Agreement. To name only one: When Biſhop *Wilkins* firſt

firſt undertook this Deſign, (*b*) *Subſtance* and *Accidents* were a receiv'd Diviſion, and accordingly in ranking Things, and reducing them to Heads, (which is the great Excellency of this Deſign) he proceeds according to the Order they ſtand in, of *Subſtance* and *Accidents*, in the *Scale* of *Prædicaments*; but were he to begin now, and would ſuit his Deſign to the Philoſophy in vogue, he muſt draw a new Scheme, and inſtead of *Accidents* muſt take in *Modes*, which are very different from *Accidents*, both in Nature and Number. Biſhop *Wilkins* was an extraordinary Perſon, but very projecting; and I doubt this Deſign may go along with his *Dædalus* and *Archimedes*, and be ranked with his *Flying Chariot* and *Voyage to the Moon*. The Diviſion of Tongues was inflicted by GOD, as a Curſe upon Human Ambition, and may have been continued ſince for the ſame Reaſon; and as no Remedy has been yet found, ſo it is moſt probable, it is not to be expected, nor are we to hope to unite that which GOD has divided. The Providence of GOD may have ſo order'd it

(*b*) *Real Char. Par.* 2. *v.* 2.

for a Check to Mens Pride, who are otherwiſe apt to be building *Babels*, were there no Difficulties to obſtruct and exerciſe them in their Way.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of GRAMMAR.

THO' *Grammar* be look'd upon by many as a trivial thing, and only the Employment of our Youth, yet the greateſt Men have not thought it beneath their Care: *Plato* and *Ariſtotle* among the *Greeks*, and *Cæſar* and *Varro* among the *Latins*, have treated of this Subject. In our Times the common Grammar, that goes under the Name of Mr. *Lily*, was done by ſome of the moſt conſiderable Men of the Age: The *Engliſh* Rudiments by Dr. *Colet*, Dean of St. *Paul*'s, with a Preface to the firſt Edition, directing its Uſe, by no leſs a Man than *Cardinal Wolſey*: The moſt rational Part, the *Syntax*, was writ or corrected *(i)* by *Eraſmus*, and the

(i) Tom. 2. p. 141.

the other Parts by other Hands: So that tho' Mr. *Lily* now bears the Name, which while living he always modeſtly refus'd, yet it was carried on by the joint Endeavours of ſeveral learned Men, and he perhaps had not the largeſt Share in that Work.

WERE there more of *Cæſar* and *Varro* extant, they might be of good Uſe to us in our Inquiries; but all *Cæſar*'s Book on this Subject being loſt, and only ſome Parts of *Varro* left, we want two good Helps: Tho' from thoſe ſhort Specimens we have of *Cæſar*, we are not to expect too much from him; he has been quoted by (*k*) *A. Gellius* with a doubtful Character, and twice or thrice (*l*) by *Charisius*, an ancient Grammarian, and always to correct him, as he will ſeem to deſerve to any one who will take the Pains to conſult the particular Places: And as for *Varro*, his Books are chiefly about the Etymologies of Words, which are of no great Uſe, being obſcure and uncertain,

(*k*) *L.* 19. *c.* 8.

(*l*) *L.* 1. *p.* 69. 214. *Ed. Putſch.*

THE

THE following Grammarians are yet more defective; we have a large Collection of them put out by *Putſchius*, who (againſt the Cuſtom of moſt Editors, that ſeldom uſe to ſpeak diſparagingly of their Authors) ingenuouſly confeſſeth, that ſome of them were ſcarce worth an Edition. And moſt of them having been writ, either when Learning was low, or after Barbariſm had begun to overflow the Empire, it is no Wonder that they do not riſe above their Level, or that while they lay down Rules in this Art, they ſcarce write in tolerable *Latin*. *Priſcian* himſelf will be no Exception to this, who, notwithſtanding his Strictneſs in giving Rules, and Severity in cenſuring others, has much ado to preſerve himſelf from Barbariſm: Let any one read ſome of his firſt Lines, he will need go no farther to make a Judgment.

SOME of our modern Critics have deſerv'd well of this Art, who as they have us'd more Perſpicuity, ſo they have writ with much greater Purity, than moſt of the

the ancient Grammarians have done: *Valla*, *Eraſmus*, and our *Linacer* have taken much Pains, and ſhewn great Judgment in this Matter; and yet after all, as if nothing had been done, ariſeth *Sanctius*, and after him *Schioppius*, and correct all that had gone before them. *Cicero* and *Quinctilian* were blind with theſe Men, who made ſuch Diſcoveries, as never had been thought of by any of the Ancients; all Grammar before them was *Cloacina*, polluted, and full of Miſtakes; theirs only is the true Way, which they pretend is highly rational, containing few and eaſy Rules, and under theſe, ſcarce any Exceptions. Tho' if this new Method be examin'd, it will be found as fallacious, and they as fallible as other Men: *Sanctius*'s great Principle on which he goes, is, that Languages, and particularly the *Latin*, are not purely arbitrary, or depending barely on Uſe and Cuſtom, but that an Analogy has been obſerved, and a Reaſon may be given of the Idioms of Tongues, and upon this he builds a Rational Grammar. This perhaps might hold in ſome Meaſure in the *Hebrew*, as far as its Words

were impos'd upon juſt Reaſons; but in the *Latin* Tongue, which he treats of, that was firſt form'd, and afterwards grew up in Confuſion; and under a People, while they were yet barbarous, we are not to expect ſuch mighty Regularity. The *Romans* knew nothing of Grammar, till the Times of *Ennius*, when that Tongue was pretty well grown, and conſequently could have no great Regard to it in forming their Language; and therefore for any one now, to pretend to fix the Analogy of Words, or to reduce all under ſtrict Rule, is to ſet Bounds where they were never intended, and to find a Reaſon that was never meant. Had Grammar been as ancient as Languages, we might have proceeded in this Manner; but it being invented only as a Help, and not framed originally as an immutable Rule, we muſt ſuit it to our Buſineſs as well as we can, but are not to expect it ſhould be uniform, and not liable to many Exceptions.

To take a ſhort View of ſome Particulars; 1. As to Letters, we are not yet agreed

agreed about their Original, which might be of Uſe in fixing our Alphabets: For tho' the *Greek* Letters, and from them the *Latin*, ſeem'd deriv'd from the *Phænician*, and theſe again from the ancient *Hebrew*, as has been attempted to be ſhewn, not only from Hiſtory, but from the Affinity of Letters, by turning the *Hebrew* Characters towards the right Hand, according to our Way of Reading; yet there lies one great Objection againſt this: That *Cadmus*, who brought the *Phænician* Letters among the *Greeks*, is only ſaid to have brought ſixteen, and therefore muſt have left ſome behind him; for the *Phænician* or *Hebrew* Alphabet was always fixt, and of the ſame length as now, ſince we have had any Writing; a ſtanding Evidence of which we have in ſeveral alphabetical Pſalms and Chapters. Were this more certain, it would help to determine our Alphabets, both as to their Numbers and Powers; whereas now we are uncertain in both, and there are great Diſputes among the Critics, as to ſome of the Elements, whether they be Letters or no.

(2.) In

2. IN the Etymological or Analogical Part, we labour under the ſame Difficulties; nor can it be otherwiſe, where Languages were ſo much the Effect of Chance, and were not fram'd by any ſettled or eſtabliſh'd Rules. When *Varro* writ his Book, *De Linguâ Latinâ*, it is plain this Analogy was a diſputable thing; he brings ſeveral Objections againſt, as well as Reaſons for it; and his Inſtances are ſo many, and his Objections ſo conſiderable, that he muſt needs be allowed to have left it doubtful. In the ſame Age, when a Queſtion was put by *Pompey* to moſt of the learned Men in *Rome*, (*m*) concerning the Analogy of a very common Word, they could come to no Reſolution about it, tho' *Cicero* was one of the Number, and ſo it was left undetermin'd. And if the thing were ſo much controverted among them, who had better Opportunities of Inquiry, as living nearer the Original, when many Monuments of Antiquity were left, and the *Latin* yet a living Language among them; it muſt needs be much more ſo to us,

(*m*) *V. A. Gell. l.* 10. *cap.* 1.

us, who live at this Diſtance, and want many of their Helps: Our greateſt Light muſt be borrow'd from their Books, and we can be only more happy in the Application. Accordingly we follow them pretty cloſe, and are much more directed by the Cuſtom of ancient and approved Authors, than by the Reaſon of Words that are perpetually varying. How many Words are there agreeable enough with Analogy, and of modern Uſe among learned Men, which yet, becauſe they are not us'd by the Ancients, are not only diſlik'd, but are look'd upon by the Critics, as *Vitia Sermonis?* Innumerable Inſtances may be had *(n)* in *Voſſius*: Few Men would be afraid to uſe, *Incertitudo*, *Ingratitudo*; and other Words of the like Nature; there is nothing diſagreeable in them, or diſproportionable to Speech; and yet becauſe they have not been us'd by the beſt Claſſic Authors, but have been ſeemingly avoided, when they came in their Way, and either paraphras'd, or *Greek* Words put in their Room, they have been exploded by our modern Criticks. The *Anomaliſms* in Words

(n) *De vit. Sermon. ſparſim.*

Words have been ſo many, and the Differences yet more among thoſe that have treated of them, that ſome have gone ſo far as to deny the thing itſelf, and to allow no Analogy either in the *Greek* or *Latin* Tongue.

3. GRAMMAR has fared no better in the conſtructive Part, whether we will be guided by Rules, or Authority of beſt Authors; the Number of Rules is become a Burden, and the Multitude of Exceptions is yet more vexatious. If we will believe *Schiappius*, there are five Hundred Rules in our common Grammars, in the *Syntax* only of Nouns, and Verbs, and Participles, and ſcarce any of thoſe without their Exceptions, and ſo proportionably in the other Parts of *Syntax*; all which muſt employ a great Part of our Time. Or if we will be directed by Authorities, the Criticks have been ſo unmercifully ſevere, that we ſcarce know which to follow: *Cicero*, tho' the moſt unexceptionable, has not eſcaped their Cenſure; he has been pelted by them, and *Valla* and *Eraſmus* have charged

charged him with Solœciſms. *Diutius commorans Athenis —— erat Animus ad te ſcribere*; and *Quum in animo haberem navigandi*, (o) are noted Paſſages to this Purpoſe. And indeed though *Cicero* be look'd upon as a Standard of Language with us, yet he was not ſo to thoſe of his own Age; *Atticus* (p) in an Epiſtle to him, chargeth him with falſe *Latin*, and being put upon a Vindication, he defends himſelf by the Authority of *Terence*; of that, whatever *Cicero* be to us, *Terence* was then the better Authority. Neither of them ſure are unexceptionable, nor any other that we can meet with, tho' we ſhould carry our Search through the whole Set.

(o) *Vid. Eraſ. Ciceron. Dial. Op. Tom.* 1. *p.* 823. *v. Valla, L.* 1. *cap*, 25.

(p) *L.* 7. *Ep.* 3.

4. PRONUNCIATION has been the Subject of great Debates, eſpecially in the *Greek* Tongue, the Pronunciation of which has been more neglected: And tho' at firſt View, it may ſeem a light Thing, and hardly worth a Debate, yet the Neglect of it has been of very ill Conſequence to that Tongue. For while the modern *Greeks* had little regard to the Powers

Powers of their Letters, and mix'd and confounded the Sounds of their Vowels and Diphthongs, and run moſt of them into one, in their Pronunciation, they came at laſt in many Words, to write as they ſpoke, which was one great Occaſion of the Corruption of their Tongue. This vicious way of Speaking was brought by the exil'd *Greeks* into *Italy*, and from thence, together with Learning, ſpread over the greateſt Part of *Europe*, till it met with a Check here in *England*, from two very eminent Men, both of them ſucceſſively Profeſſors in the *Univerſity* of *Cambridge*, Sir *Thomas Smith*, and Sir *John Cheek*. And becauſe the Controverſy is not much known, and may afford ſome Light to the Pronunciation of the *Greek*, I will give a brief Account of this Grammatical War.

IT was in the latter End of *Hen.* VIII's Reign, that *Smith* and *Cheek* began to obſerve the Inconveniencies in this ſort of Pronunciation: They ſaw that not only the Beauty of the Language was

loſt in this Way, but likewiſe its very Spirit and Life were gone, by the Loſs of ſo many Vowels and Diphthongs, and the Language become *Jejune* and Languid: In this way of ſpeaking it, nothing of Numeroſity appear'd in the Ancient Orators and Rhetoricians, nor thoſe flowing Periods, for which they had been renown'd in Old *Greece*; neither could they themſelves ſhew their Eloquence, in their Orations or Lectures, for want of the Beauty and Variety of Sounds. This put them upon thinking of a Reformation, (*q*) and having conſulted moſt of the Ancient Rhetoricians, and other *Greek* Authors, who had treated of Sounds, and finding ſufficient Grounds from thence for an Alteration; with the Conſent of moſt of the learned Linguiſts in the Univerſity, they ſet about the Work, with ſome little Oppoſition at firſt, but afterwards with Succeſs, and almoſt general Approbation. *Cromwell* was then Chancellor of the Univerſity, under whom Reformations were not ſo dangerous; but *Gardiner* ſucceeding, who diſliked all Innovations, a Stop was put for

(*q*) *V. Cheek, De Ling. Gr. Pronunc. Diſput. cum Steph. Wint. ſparſ. V. Smith De Pronunc. Ling. Gr.*

for ſome Time: This Man aſſum'd a Power, that *Cæſar* never exerciſs'd, of giving Law to Words; and having writ to *Cheek*, then *Greek* Profeſſor, to deſiſt from this new Method, which in reality was the ancient and true Way, and not meeting with a ſuitable Compliance, he ſends out an Order in his own Name and the Senate's, which being too long to inſert at large, I ſhall only mention two or three Heads of it, as being ſomewhat extraordinary.

Quiſquis noſtram poteſtatem agnoſcis, ſonos literis, ſive Græcis ſive Latinis, ab uſu publico præſentis ſæculi alienos privato judicio affingere ne audeto.

Diphthongos Græcas nedum Latinas, niſi id diæreſis exigat, ſonis ne diducito———

Αι ab ε, & ει ab, ι, *ſono ne diſtinguito, tantum in Orthographia diſcrimen ſervato*; η, ι, υ, *uno eodemque ſono exprimito.*———

Ne multa. In ſonis omnino ne philoſophator, ſed utitor præſentibus.———

AFTER ſuch a publick Declaration, there was no farther Room for private Judgment; an Obedience was paid, and *Gardiner*'s Way prevail'd, till a Reformation in Religion made way for a Reformation in Language, that has obtain'd ever ſince. However, the Controverſy was then manag'd with much Warmth and Learning: *Gardiner* inſiſted principally upon Cuſtom, and the Authority of the preſent *Greeks*. On the other ſide, they pleaded Antiquity, and that drawn down from the moſt Ancient Authors; ſeveral of the *Greek* Rhetoricians were brought into the Controverſy, and other Authors that had dropt any Expreſſion that look'd that Way; and a Man would wonder to ſee ſo much Learning ſhewn on ſo dry a Subject. Where the Victory lay is pretty viſible, and ſo great a Man (*r*) as *Du Freſne* could not have been at a loſs, how to determine the Matter, had he not been poſſeſs'd with Partiality for a Party, which he ſhews too plainly, by blaming Biſhop *Goodwin* (though very unjuſtly) for leaving *Gardiner*

(*r*) *Gloſ. Gr. Præf.* §. 12.

Gardiner out of this Catalogue of Bishops.

BUT I have run out too far in Grammatical Niceties; whoever desires more on this Subject, may meet with enough in Bishop *Wilkins* (*f*), and I have principally insisted on such Particulars as have been neglected or overlook'd by him.

(*f*) *R. Char. L.* 1. *cap.* 4. *&c.*

CHAP. IV.

Of RHETORICK *and* ELOQUENCE.

AS Grammar teaches us to ſpeak properly, ſo it is the Part of Rhetorick to inſtruct, how to do it elegantly, by adding Beauty to that Language, that before was naked and grammatically true. If we would be nice in diſtinguiſhing, there is a Difference betwixt Rhetorick and Eloquence, tho' we treat of them under the ſame Head; the one lays down Rules, the other practiſes them; and a Man may be a very good Rhetorician, and yet at the ſame time a mean Orator: Perhaps *Quinctilian* gives as good Rules as *Cicero*, I am ſure in better Method, and with greater Cloſeneſs;

neſs; whereas the other is ſo much an Orator, that he cannot forget it; whilſt he acts the Part of a Rhetorician, he dilates and flouriſhes, and gives Example inſtead of Rule: And yet a Man that would form a Compariſon betwixt *Quinctilian*'s Declamations, (if yet they be *Quinctilian*'s) and the Orations of *Tully*, would be in great Danger of forfeiting his Diſcretion.

THE Ancient *Romans* had Orators among them, and ſome Eloquence; Inſtances whereof we have in their Hiſtory almoſt as high as the *Tarquins*: But it was then a chaſte thing without Paint or Dreſs; Rhetorick was not yet known among them, the Name of it was not ſo much as heard of ſome hundred Years after, they wanting a Word to expreſs it by, which they were afterwards forc'd to borrow from the *Greeks* (*t*). As ſoon as it came among them, we trace it in its Effects; for as among the *Grecians*, whence it was borrow'd, it had occaſion'd Tumults and Concuſſions of State, eſpecially at *Athens*, where it prevail'd moſt,

(*t*) *Quinct. L. 2. cap.* 14.

moſt, only *Lacedæmon* was more quiet, from whence it was baniſh'd, and where a plain *Laconick* Stile was in Vogue; ſo at *Rome*, when once it had got any Footing, and the *Gracchi*, the *Bruti*, and other Demagogues begun to harangue the People, there was no more Peace in that State, nothing but continual Broils and inteſtine Commotions, till they had fought themſelves out of that Liberty which they ſeem'd to contend for, and their Heats ended in the Ruin of their Commonwealth. The *Roman* Orator had ſeen ſo much of this in his Time, before Things were brought to the laſt Extremity, that he begins his Book of (*u*) Rhetorick with a Doubt, whether that Art had brought greater Advantage or Detriment to the Commonwealth? And if an Orator, where he is treating of Eloquence, were ſo doubtful in the Matter, we need not be at a loſs on which ſide to determine the Caſe.

(*u*) *De Invent Rhet. L.* 1.

To paſs by Conſequences that are not juſtly chargeable on Things, which are generally good or otherwiſe, according as

as the Perſons are that uſe them, we will conſider the Art itſelf. If it be an Advantage to any Art, to have been treated of by Men that are ſkilful in it, this Art ſhould have received greater Improvements, and be nearer Perfection than moſt others, having been conſidered by one of the greateſt Maſters that ever was. *Cicero* has compos'd pretty large Treatiſes upon this Subject, that have been preſerv'd and delivered down to us; particularly two (*x*), in the former of which as he treats of the ſeveral Kinds, and lays down ſuch Rules, as are neceſſary to be obſerv'd in our Way to Eloquence; ſo in the latter he delineates and gives us the Pourtraiture of a perfect Orator. I will not pretend to judge of ſo great a Maſter; thus much may be ſaid with Modeſty enough, that as in the firſt Treatiſe, the Perſons in the Dialogue differ from one another; ſo in the latter the Orator ſeems to differ from himſelf: In the firſt he is doubtful, in the latter impracticable. In this Dialogue, (which has ſo much the Face of Probability, that ſome among the Learned have miſtaken

(*x*) *De Oratore. Orator, ſive Brutus.*

taken it for a real Conference;) the Perſons introduc'd are equally Great, and argue and diſcourſe with equal Learning; and he having aſſign'd no Part to himſelf, conſiſtently with his Doubtfulneſs in this Matter, a Man may ſometimes be at a loſs, which Side to cloſe with. And his *Orator* is too great and inimitable an Example, perfectly imaginary, and conſequently of no Uſe in human Life, for which Eloquence is deſign'd. He himſelf gives him only an ideal Being, and owns that he is no where to be found but in the Conceptions of our Mind.

And indeed we muſt not expect to find him any where elſe, if all thoſe Things be neceſſary to an Orator that he ſeems to require. For, firſt, *Nature* and *Genius* are indiſpenſably neceſſary, without which the Wheels being clogg'd and under Force, will drive heavily; our Orator muſt have a flowing Invention to furniſh him with Ideas, a ſtrong Imagination to impreſs them, a happy Memory to retain, and a true Judgment to diſpoſe

diſpoſe them in their due Rank and Order. He muſt have Law, to lead him into the Knowledge of the Conſtitution and Cuſtoms of his Country; Hiſtory, to acquaint him with Examples; Logic, to ſupply him with proper *Topicks*; and Morality, to enable him to penetrate into, and apply to the Manners and Paſſions of Men, the Ἤθη and Πάθη, which are the Springs of Action, and Sources of Perſwaſion: In ſhort, being to treat of every thing, he muſt be ignorant of nothing. He muſt be, in *Cicero*'s Language, a *Wiſe Man*; that is, a Man of Univerſal Knowledge; and, what is more a Paradox, he muſt likewiſe be a *Good Man*; a Quality that ſo rarely accompanied Heathen Eloquence, that both *Cicero* and *Quinctilian* are much at a Plunge in aſſerting it to the *Greek* and *Roman* Orators. He muſt not only have a general Knowledge of Things, but muſt have Skill in adorning them; he muſt have the greateſt Art, and yet at the ſame time the Skill to conceal it; for whenever Art appears, it loſeth its Effect, and nothing can pleaſe, much leſs perſwade,

perſwade, but what is natural. The moſt external Things are neceſſary to his Accompliſhment; he muſt not only have Eloquence in his Words, but likewiſe in his Looks; decent Motions, and an Air of Perſwaſion, that graceful Action and Pronunciation, which *Demoſthenes* made the firſt, and ſecond, and third Thing, and which had ſo great a Share in his own Compoſures, that we are not to wonder that his Orations pleaſe leſs in the Reading, than they did in the Deliverance, as wanting three Parts of what they had when they were ſpoke.

THESE being the Qualifications that are neceſſary to a compleat and perfect Orator, it is next to impoſſible, there ſhould ever be any ſuch Man. If any ſuch were, in whom all theſe Conditions met, it muſt have been he who requires them, I mean *Cicero*, who had the happieſt *Genius*, and that cultivated with the greateſt Art and Induſtry, that perhaps ever Man had; he whom *Quinctilian* (*y*) oppoſeth to all the *Grecian* Orators, to whom he gives the Force of *Demoſthenes*, the Sweetneſs of

(*y*) *L.* 10. *cap.* 1.

of *Iſocrates*, and the *Copia* of *Plato*; he whom he ſtiles by the Name not of a Man, but of Eloquence itſelf; and gives it as a Rule, by which a Man may judge of his own Proficiency in Eloquence, if *Cicero* begins to pleaſe him: Yet this *Cicero* was ſo far from pleaſing in his own Age, that as he met with Detractors among his Enemies, one of which compos'd a Treatiſe (*x*) againſt him, under a very diſparaging Title; ſo he did not ſatisfy *Brutus* among his Friends, who taxeth him with Looſeneſs in his Compoſures, and charges him with want of Nerves and Strength. And *Quinctilian* (*a*), where he comes to explain himſelf, tells us, That he ſtiles *Cicero* a compleat Orator only in the vulgar Meaning of the Word, for in the ſtrict Senſe he was yet to ſeek, and does not only deſire Perfection in him, but acquaints us with the Faults he was charged with (*b*), to wit, That he was turgid and ſwelling in his Expreſſions, too frequent in Repetitions, broken in his Compoſition, and not only eaſy in his Stile, but ſoft. In the laſt Age, when Learning begun to revive, and

(*x*) *Largius Licinius apud Gell. L.* 1. *cap.* 17.

(*a*) *L.* 12. *cap.* 1.

(*b*) *L.* 12. *cap.* 10.

and *Cicero* was ſtudied almoſt to the Neglect of our Bibles; yet one of our great Criticks in the *Latin* Tongue, could never be reconcil'd to a *Ciceronian* Stile, nor could hear him read (*c*) without Wearineſs and ſomewhat of Loathing.

(*c*) *Certè Linacer — Ciceronis dictionem nunquam probare potuit, nec ſine faſtidio audire. V. Gard. Epiſt. ad Cheek p.* 176.

IT is not yet agreed among the Learned, which of his Compoſures are the moſt elegant, otherwiſe it were eaſier to know where to make our Reflections. Sir *William Temple* brings his Oration for *Labienus* (*d*), (whom, by an Error very pardonable among ſo many Excellencies, he miſtakes for *Ligarius)* as an Inſtance of the Power of Human Eloquence. It muſt be confeſs'd this is a remarkable Inſtance; here was the greateſt Orator and the greateſt Judge, (for *Cæſar* is allow'd by *Cicero* to be one of the moſt eloquent Perſons of his Time) *Cæſar* comes into the Place of Judicature, breathing Revenge againſt *Ligarius*, and with an obſtinate Reſolution to condemn him, but with Difficulty is prevail'd with to hear

(*d*) *P.*313.

Cicero

Cicero in his Defence, which he gives way to, rather as a thing of meer Form, than with any Thoughts of yielding to his Perſwaſion: However, no ſooner is he heard, but he moves and affects; and when he comes to touch upon *Pharſalia*, the Conqueror has no more Soul left; he takes Fire, and is tranſported beyond himſelf; he ſhakes and trembles, and drops the Paper that he held in his Hand; and in ſpite of all his Reſolutions, abſolves the Criminal, whom he was determined to condemn. And now I think I have allow'd enough to Eloquence; but to deal impartially, the Force of it is ſo great, and the Effect of it ſo wonderful in this Inſtance, that it would raiſe a Man's Curioſity to inquire into the Cauſe. Had this Oration been loſt, we ſhould have had moſt terrible Outcries and lamentable Complaints among the Learned, of the Loſs that the World had ſuſtain'd in ſo conſummate a Piece. Lo, it is yet extant! And altho' this, as every thing of *Cicero*'s, be excellent in its kind, yet ſo much will be granted, that it may be read without Rapture and Amazement.

BUT

BUT granting as much Force to Eloquence as can be deſired, how is it, it does perſwade, in this and other Inſtances? I am ſure not from rational Arguments, which ought to be the proper Means of convincing a reaſonable Man, but from quite different Motives and *Topicks* of Perſwaſion: *Cæſar*'s deliberate, and perhaps moſt reaſonable Reſolution, was not to pardon ſo great a Criminal, an implacable Wretch, that had afterwards a Hand in the Blood of his Deliverer. The Orator does not ſo much ſeek to convince him of the Unreaſonableneſs of the Thing, as endeavour to prevail with him from other Inducements; he applies to his Paſſions inſtead of his Reaſon, his weak and blind Side, by putting him in mind of the *Pharſalian* Field, of his Glory in ſubduing, and the greater Honours he had acquired by pardoning; he ſtiles him *Father*, tho' at the ſame time he thought him an Uſurper, and bids him remember, it was his People that begg'd *Ligarius* of him, and that he could not do a more popular Thing, than

by yielding to their Requeſts, and giving way to his uſual Clemency. Such are the Topicks that are brought from Rhetorick! The Truth of it is, our common Eloquence is uſually a Cheat upon the Underſtanding; it deceives us with Appearances, inſtead of Things; and makes us think we ſee Reaſon, whilſt it is tickling our Senſe: Its ſtrongeſt Proofs do often conſiſt in an artificial Turn of Words, and beautiful Expreſſions, which if unravell'd, its Strength is gone, and the Reaſon is deſtroy'd.

THERE are few that read *Seneca*, that do not imagine he writes with great Force and Strength, his Thoughts are lofty, almoſt every Line in him is a Sentence, and every Sentence does ſeem a Reaſon; and yet it has been well obſerv'd, by a Maſter in the *Art of Thinking* (*e*), who has taken ſome Pains in unravelling ſome of his loftieſt Expreſſions, that there is little more in him, at the Bottom, than a Pomp of Words. And the ſame Obſervation is made there,

(*e*) *Malebranche Recherch. P.3.lib.2. ch.4.*

upon two other Authors, the one of whom is not ſo proper to be mentioned, the other is not worth the Mention: All of them are known, and are as much quoted, and will go as far in popular Diſcourſes, as Authors of cloſer Thought.

IT is not enough to ſay, that this is the Fault of thoſe Authors, and not of Eloquence; for its End being to perſwade, and the Perſons whom we are to deal with, being uſually the People, who, as they are the Moſt, are not generally the Wiſeſt; if we would perſwade them, we muſt ſuit ourſelves to their Capacities, otherwiſe we muſt be content to loſe our End. An appoſite Similitude is Argument with them, and a quaint Saying will go farther than a ſubſtantial Reaſon; for being guided by Imagination, they are moſt affected with ſenſible Reſemblances; and not having Capacity to penetrate into Things, that which is eaſieſt, and lies uppermoſt, perſwades them moſt: So that, unleſs we could make them wiſe, they will be eaſy

eaſy and credulous, and will be led by Appearances inſtead of Truth. And this is one Reaſon, why Eloquence could never flouriſh, at leaſt not arrive to any conſiderable Height, unleſs it were among a People that had Underſtandings above the ordinary Size, ſuch as the *Athenians* once were, and afterwards the *Romans:* And for the ſame Reaſon it is, that the wiſeſt Men are not always the beſt Orators, either at the *Bar* or in the *Chair*; for they are too much above the Peoples Level, their Artillery ſhoots over, and it is no Wonder if they miſs their Aim. And if it be yet ſaid, there is notwithſtanding ſuch a thing as true Eloquence, that will always have its Force with wiſe Men: I grant there is; but beſides that this is to reſtrain us to a very narrow Compaſs, wiſe Men will be moſt guided by wiſe Conſiderations, ſuch as are grounded upon cloſe Argument, and rational Concluſions, which are more properly the Buſineſs of Logick, than of Rhetorick and Eloquence.

HAVING gone thus far in my Reflections, principally with regard to the Ancient Orators, it is almoſt needleſs to examine the Moderns; ſome of their Patrons in other Sorts of Learning, have given up the Compariſon in this; ſo that if the Ancients are found to be wanting in their Perfection, we are not to expect to find it in the Moderns. However, a Word or two of them. The *French* have ſhewn moſt Care in this Particular, among whom an Academy has been erected for the refining the Language; the Members whereof have ſpent whole Days in examining the Propriety of a Word, and have been no leſs accurate in ſtudying the Beauties and Ornaments of Speech, and Numeroſity of their Periods: But I doubt the Obſervation is true, that whilſt they have been ſo ſcrupulouſly Nice, they have run into the Fault of over-much Accuracy, and by adding Beauty to their Language, have broken its Strength; by Spinning and Refining it, and giving it too much Paint and Flouriſh, much of its maſculine

line Strength is loſt; and I have ſometimes thought that it boded not well to that Society, that their firſt Prize of Eloquence was given to a Woman *(f)*. It is certainly a Fault in Oratory to be too curious in the Choice of Words; a bold Period, tho' againſt Rule, will pleaſe more, than to be always in Phraſe; and a decent Negligence is often a Beauty in Expreſſion, as well as Dreſs; whereas by being over Correct or always Flouriſhing, our Periods become either too luſcious or too ſtiff. And yet though ſome Members of the *French Academy* have pretty freely cenſured this Fault, and have deſervedly laughed at ſome Gentlemen, that did not only miſpend their Time in ſtudied Periods, but in avoiding rough and unſound Words, it is plain ſome of their own Brethren have run into the ſame Fault, and have been curious and affected in their Stile, almoſt to a degree of Superſtition. For what can be ſaid leſs of him who compos'd *(g)* a large Book in five Volumes, in all which he declined making uſe of a common, and almoſt unavoidable

(f) *Madl. de Scudery.*

(g) *M. de Gomberville. v. Hiſt. Acad. Franc. p.* 50.

(*b*) *Car.* Word (*b*), only becauſe it did not pleaſe him? Or did Mr. *Vaugelas* employ his Time better, who having undertaken the Tranſlation of *Quintus Curtius*, no very great Performance, ſpent thirty Years in tranſlating his Author, and yet left it an unfiniſhed Work? In which Work it is very remarkable, that having left five or ſix different Tranſlations in the Margin of his Book, that which ſtood firſt was generally approved of as the beſt (*i*), as containing his firſt and natural Thoughts, whereas the others were probably more forced and ſtrained.

(*i*) *Ibid. p.* 213.

BUT Mr. *Peliſſon*, in his Hiſtory of the *Academy*, has given us a *Panegyrick* upon the *French* King, which I ſuppoſe is deſign'd as a Specimen of *French* Eloquence; and being there in five different Languages, every Man may read it in a known Tongue, and be able, in ſome Meaſure, to judge, to what degree of Perfection, Oratory has arrived among our Neighbours: Though the Truth of it is, the *Engliſh* Tranſlation is wretchedly mangled, and ſo different from the Author's

thor's Senſe, that it ceaſes to be his. However, take it in the Original, I believe it will not be pretended, that he has painted out his *Hero* in ſuch charming Colours, as either *Pliny* has done his *Trajan*, or *Cicero Pompey* in one of his Orations *(k)*, or *Cæſar* in another. The *Academy*'s Rhetorick is yet wanting, which they have given us an Expectation of, both in the ſame Hiſtory, and in the Preface to their Dictionary. But that Work having coſt them forty Years, and a Grammar being in Order their next Undertaking, if that likewiſe ſhould employ them a proportionable Time, their Rules of Eloquence ſeem reſerved for Poſterity, and not for us.

(k) *Pro lege Manilia. Pro Marcel. & Ligar.*

THE *Engliſh*, as they have not taken the ſame Pains, nor purſued the Deſign with equal Induſtry with their Neighbours, by erecting Societies for the Improvement of Oratory; ſo whatever their Performances have been, they have been more modeſt in their Pretenſions: For though the *French* have compoſed large Volumes upon this Subject, with much

Oſtentation, yet I ſcarce know of any, that have been publiſh'd by the *Engliſh*; whether it be that their *Genius* inclines them to Strength rather than Beauty, or that truſting to their native Force, they deſpiſe the Fineneſs of Art. They have indeed been charged by their Neighbours (l) with a ſort of Eloquence that is not very charming, in beginning their Diſcourſes generally with ſome Prophecy or ſurpriſing Story; which if it were true, is not perhaps ſo much to be attributed to their want of Skill, as to their Compliance with the Humour of a People, that attend too much to Prophecies, and are too much affected with Stories: But however it were 200 Years ago, when the Obſervation was firſt made, it is otherwiſe now, when Oratory, after the many Changes it has undergone, has put on a quite different Face: Tho' even from thoſe frequent Alterations, its Inſtability is too remarkable, and would tempt a Man to think, that in ſome Meaſure it depends upon Humour, and has not ſo immoveable a Foundation as might be wiſh'd.

(l) *V. Com. ap. Journ. des Scavans. An. 65. p. 100.*

FOR

FOR to look back, a very little, in thoſe dark Times, it is not impoſſible, that Eloquence was much about that pitch, the Obſervation would have it, in a blind Age, when Legends were in Faſhion, and the People were kept in Ignorance, and led by Wonder: A Reformation in Religion brought with it an Advancement in Learning; and as Elegancy begun then to be reſtored to the *Latin* Tongue, ſo in Queen *Elizabeth*'s Reign, the Writers of that Age ſeem to have affected a *Ciceronian* Stile in *Engliſh*, both in the Length of their Periods, and often by throwing the Verb to the End of the Sentence: The ſucceeding Reign degenerated rather than improved, when the Generality run into an affected way of Writing, and nothing would pleaſe, without a fantaſtick Dreſs and Jingle of Words. And tho' in the following Reign, this way of Writing was much laid aſide, yet even then they larded their Diſcourſes ſo thick with Sentences of *Greek* and *Latin*, that as Things now are, it would be a hard Matter

ter to excuſe them from Pedantry. What ſort of Oratory obtain'd in the late Times of Confuſion, is well known, eſpecially in the Pulpit: As if the Obſervation of our Neighbours had been calculated from them; little Similitudes, and odd Examples, and a worſe ſort of Cant, was the Eloquence of theſe Times; which notwithſtanding charm'd the People to that degree, that it hurried them beſides themſelves, and almoſt out of their Wits. And tho' Oratory may be thought to be now at its full Height, and we may flatter ourſelves, that nothing can be added to the Strength and Solidity of thoſe Diſcourſes, that are publiſhed among us almoſt every Day, upon every Subject; yet I will not undertake, but that ſomewhat may be produced in the next Age, ſo much more perfect, at leaſt more pleaſing, than any thing we yet have, that the preſent Eloquence ſhall be looked upon by our Poſterity with the ſame Neglect, with which we now treat the Performances of our Forefathers. No doubt, what they writ pleas'd their own Age, as much as our moſt boaſted

Pieces pleaſe now; and we ought not to be too confident in our Performances, with Diſregard to other Ages; unleſs we will make ourſelves the Standard of Eloquence, and not give other Men leave to judge of Us, as we have done of thoſe before.

I KNOW no Reaſon, why it may not vary according to Times as well as Places, which in the latter Caſe it ſo evidently does, that that which is looked upon as elegant in one Nation, would be laugh'd at by another People. The *Eaſtern* Nations are ſo different from us in their Stile, that could our moſt elegant Compoſures be underſtood by them, they would be thought flat and inſipid; they being ſo accuſtomed to ſublime and lofty Expreſſions, that nothing will affect them, but what is fetch'd from the Sun, and Moon, and Stars. And nearer home, where the Differences ought not to be ſo conſiderable, the *French* and *Italians*, who have taking ſuch Pains, and ſpent ſo much Time in poliſhing their Stile, yet charge one another with Imperfections

tions in their way of Writing, and both of them differ from the *Engliſh*. Every Nation can diſcover Faults in their Neighbours, and do not conſider that their Neighbours ſee the like Faults to blame in them.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of LOGICK.

LOGICK, in the modern Phraſe, is the ART of THINKING; and being deſigned for a Help or Inſtrument of Reaſon, its very Nature implies Weakneſs in the Underſtanding; and therefore we ought not to value ourſelves too much upon our Ability, in giving ſubtle Rules, and finding out Logical Arguments, ſince it would be more Perfection not to want them. GOD Almighty, who ſees all things intuitively, does not want theſe Helps: He neither ſtands in need of Logick, nor uſes it; but we, whoſe Underſtandings are ſhort, are

are forced to collect one thing from another, and in that Proceſs we ſeek out proper *Mediums*, and call in all other Helps, that may be ſubſervient to Reaſon.

THERE was little conſiderable done in this Matter before *Ariſtotle*, (for the *Eleatick* Logick was only an Art of Wrangling, as the *Academick* was of Doubting :) He was the great Advancer of this Art, inſomuch, that ever ſince his Time, the main Grounds of Reaſoning have been borrowed from him, even by thoſe that have deſpiſed him. But as nothing can be begun and perfected together ; ſo his Logick has been charged with ſeveral Defects ; for whereas all Logick is properly reduceable to the four principal Operations of the Mind, the two firſt of theſe have been handled by *Ariſtotle* very perfunctorily, to ſay no worſe, and of the fourth he has ſaid nothing at all : Moſt of his Time has been ſpent upon the third Operation, of which he has treated ſo largely, that his Logick is in Effect,

an

an Art of Syllogizing. In this he glories as his own Invention, and has been ſo much valued upon it by ſome, that it has been ſtil'd by a modern Author, *(m) the greateſt Effort of Human Wit.* But though the Invention be confeſſedly extraordinary, to reduce our vague Thoughts and looſe Reaſonings, that are almoſt infinite, to certain Rules, and make them conclude in *Mode* and *Figure*; yet whoſoever conſiders the Nature of a Syllogiſm, in how many Things it may be falſe in the Matter, and peccant in Form, that not only the *Terms* and Propoſitions muſt anſwer to one another, but muſt be adapted to the Notions of Things, and that theſe two are hard to be connected; whilſt every little Slip in a Propoſition, or Ambiguity in a Word, can ſpoil the Syllogiſm, will have a leſs Opinion of its Concluſiveneſs, and will find it a hard Thing to bind any Syllogiſm ſo cloſe upon the Mind, as not to be evaded under ſome plauſible Diſtinction.

(m) *Rapin Reflex. ſur la Log. p.* 375.

ANOTHER

(n) *Bacon, Nov. Organ. p.* 50. 132.

ANOTHER Modern *(n)* I am ſure had this Opinion of the Matter, for which Reaſon he thought it neceſſary to ſeek out another ſort of Logick.

I ONLY hint at the principal Operations of the Mind, for if I ſhould deſcend to leſs Particulars, there are few Things in *Ariſtotle*, that have not been excepted againſt by Modern Authors; ſome of whom have gone ſo far, as to queſtion the Genuineneſs of his Books, becauſe forſooth, they cannot diſcover in them that *Flumen Orationis*, that *Cicero* ſpeaks of. But tho' there can be no ſufficient Ground to think them ſpurious, notwithſtanding better Arguments have been brought to that Purpoſe by an eminent Philoſopher of theſe later Ages *(o)*, yet we have too much Reaſon to believe they were corrupted from *Strabo*'s (*p*) Account of their having being mutilated and conſumed with Moiſture, by being bury'd ſo long under Ground in *Greece* after *Ariſtotle*'s Death; and after they were brought to *Rome*,

(o) *Pit. Mirand. Tom.* 2. *p.* 688, &c.

(*p.*) *V. Lib.* 13.

Rome, by having been again mangled by ignorant Tranſcribers: So that it is hard to know how much we have of *Ariſtotle*.

THE Logick in uſe among the *Romans*, was rather a ſort of Rhetorick than Logick, in which Senſe it is generally to be underſtood, where we meet with Mention of it among them: It was firſt borrow'd from the *Stoics* who were in Vogue at *Rome*, before *Ariſtotle* was much known there; and their Logick having been rather Specious than Solid, and conſiſting much in Pomp of Words, and in giving plauſible Colours to improbable Things, was beſt fitted to that People, who were little farther concerned for that Art, than as it was of uſe in point of Eloquence. And though *Cicero* takes in *Ariſtotle*, eſpecially in the *Topical* Part, that has moſt Affinity with Rhetorick, yet it is plain, he has likewiſe followed the *Stoics*, though it was not reputable enough to be own'd. What the *Romans* have done upon this Subject, is not worth much Notice, having had

little Occaſion to make uſe of this Art, and what they have of it to Purpoſe, being borrow'd from *Ariſtotle*; the active Life was their Buſineſs, and Diſputing never ſeems to have been much in Faſhion with them.

HOWEVER, when *Cicero* begun to revive in theſe latter Ages, this ſort of Logick was again attempted; the Men of nice Palates could not reliſh *Ariſtotle*, as he was dreſt up by the *Schoolmen*, and were ſo madly ſtruck with *Cicero*, that they thought all ſorts of Learning were to be borrowed from his Stores! *Cicero* is drawn in beyond his Province, and his *Topicks* ranſacked to frame a Logick. But tho' theſe Men were extraordinary Perſons, yet nothing ſhews more plainly, how neceſſary it is for Men to keep within their proper Bounds; for when they come to treat of this Matter, it is ſo foreign and unweildy in their Hands, that they make very ordinary Work. They bring indeed ſome plauſible Objections againſt *Ariſtotle*, and ſo far they are within their proper Sphere; but

but when they ſhould lay down ſomewhat new of their own, they either offer nothing, or what they do, is ſo unſucceſsfully, as only to ſhew that they are out of their Element, and that Logick is none of their Talent. I ſpeak this of the firſt Reformers of Learning: For though *Ramus* run in with them, in his Oppoſition to *Ariſtotle*, yet he has outdone them in this, that he himſelf has given us a plauſible *Syſtem*; (for I cannot look upon *Valla*'s Performance to be ſo much) which though it was much read and commented on, upon its firſt appearing in the World, yet ſeems now to be diſregarded, and in the next Age may probably be forgot.

MY Lord *Bacon* ſaw clearer into the Defects of this Art, than moſt Men did; and being neither ſatisfied with the vulgar Logick, nor with its Reformations that were made, ſuitably to his vaſt and exterpriſing *Genius*, attempted a Logick wholly new, the Plan of which is laid down in his *Novum Organum*. The way of Syllogizing ſeemed to him very falla-

cious, and too dependent upon Words, to be much rely'd on; his Search was after Things, and therefore he brought in a new way of Arguing from *Induction*, and that grounded upon Obſervation and Experiments. Though this Plan, as laid down by him, looks liker an *Univerſal Art*, than a diſtinct Logick, and the Deſign is too great, and the Induction too large to be made by one Man, or any Society of Men in one Age, if at all practicable: For whatever Opinion he might have of the Concluſiveneſs of this Way, one croſs Circumſtance in an Experiment would as eaſily overthrow his *Induction*, as an ambiguous Word would diſorder a Syllogiſm; and a Man needs only make a Tryal, in any Part of Natural Hiſtory, as left us by my Lord *Bacon*, to ſee how concluſive his *Induction* was like to have been. To ſay nothing, that notwithſtanding his blaming the common Logicks, as being too much ſpent in Words, Himſelf runs into the Fault, that he condems: for what elſe can we make of his *Idola Tribûs*, *Idola Specûs*, *Fori*, *Theatri*, or of this *Inſtantiæ Solitariæ*,

tariæ, *Migrantes*, *Oſtenſivæ*, *Clandeſtinæ*, *Conſtitutivæ*, &c. but fine Words put to expreſs very common and ordinary Things?

AFTER the Way of free Thinking had been laid open by my Lord *Bacon*, it was ſoon after greedily followed; for the Underſtanding affects Freedom as well as the Will, and Men will purſue Liberty, tho' it ends in Confuſion. The *Carteſians* have been obſerv'd to be no Friends to Logick; their Maſter has left nothing extant upon that Subject, except ſome ſcatter'd Expreſſions; unleſs a Treatiſe of Method muſt be interpreted a Logick, which notwithſtanding is more properly Metaphyſical. One of his firſt Principles of Reaſoning, after he had doubted of every thing, ſeems to be too circular to be ſafely built upon; for he is for proving the Being of a GOD from the Truth of our Faculties, and the Truth of our Faculties from the Being of a GOD: He had better have ſuppos'd our Faculties to be true, for they being the Inſtruments that we make uſe of in all

our Proofs and Deductions, unleſs we ſuppoſe them to be true, we are at a Stand, and can go no farther in our Proofs: So that the way of Suppoſing ſeems to be more rational than that of Doubting.

THE Notion of perceiving Things by *Ideas*, is of a Piece with this, which, however plauſible it might ſeem when firſt ſtarted, after it came to be examined, Mens *Ideas* about the ſame Objects happened to be ſo vaſtly different, and that in Things that were the moſt clearly and diſtinctly perceived, that it was a great Prejudice againſt this Opinion. There are few of the firſt ſtarted Ideas that have not been examin'd, and many of them effectually confuted, by the late Improvers of this Way, and other Ideas ſubſtituted in their Room, which have given no more Satisfaction to others, than the Firſt did to them: And till we can agree about ſome Rule or Standard, by which to meaſure and adjuſt our Ideas, it is only a looſe way of Thinking, and there can be no End of Controverſy this Way.

Way. Although there be little Hopes of this, whilſt we have Reaſon to believe, that nothing pleaſeth more in this Way than the Liberty it gives, or which every Man takes, of framing new and fine Ideas. I am no Enemy to free Thinking, yet I muſt always wiſh, we might proceed by ſome Rule, (for a Rule is no Bar, but a Perfection of Freedom) otherwiſe, I am ſure there is no Agreement to be expected, and it is to be feared we ſhall end in Confuſion. Clear and diſtinct Perception has been given us for a Rule, and the Conformity of our Ideas with the Reality of Things, has been given as another; but it is no good Proof of either, that Men have differed much in ſome of thoſe Things, that have been ſuppoſed to be the moſt clearly perceived, and moſt agreeable to the Nature of Things. The great Difficulty is, in diſcovering that Conformity, or in clearing and diſtinguiſhing our Thoughts; for every Man's Ideas are clear to himſelf.

IT would be looked upon as an Omiſſion, to paſs by the *Art of Thinking*, ſup-

(q) *L' Art de Penſ. Par.* 68.

poſed to be writ by M. *Arnault* (q). The beſt Part of it muſt be owned to be borrowed from *Ariſtotle*, only by cloathing old *Terms* under new *Ideas*, which ſhews that it is not ſo eaſy to frame a new Logick as a new Philoſophy, and gives Ground of Suſpicion, that this Philoſophy is not at perfect Amity with Reaſon, otherwiſe they might more eaſily be adapted to one another. One thing upon which this Author values himſelf, is, his ſubſtituting uſeful Inſtances, in the Place of thoſe trivial common ones, formerly in uſe with the old Logicians, which he makes an Objection to the old Way: But can it be an Objection to any thing, that it is ſuited to the End for which it was deſigned? The Uſe of Inſtances is to illuſtrate and explain a Difficulty, and this End is beſt anſwered by ſuch Inſtances as are familiar and common: Whereas the Inſtances which this Man brings, are uſually taken from other Sciences, and ſuppoſe Men to be wiſe already, contrary to the Intention of Logick, which is only an Introduction to other Sciences, and being fitted for Beginners,

ginners, ſuppoſeth our Knowledge to be yet weak, and is deſigned for an Inſtrument to help us forward. And yet there is a worſe Objection againſt his Inſtances, that many of them being borrowed from an unſound and corrupt Divinity, they can hardly be read by Beginners without Danger of being corrupted: For ſuch falſe Opinions are never more contagious, than when they are held forth to us under ſuch plauſible Appearances; nor are their Impreſſions ever like to be more laſting, than when they are ſuck'd in with the Principles of Reaſon. I will not ſay, that theſe Opinions are ſown there on purpoſe, that they might grow up with our Reaſon, but where ſo much Divinity is mixt with our Logick, it is very ſuſpicious that it has a Meaning,

THE laſt Syſtem of Logick that I have met with, is the *Medicina Mentis*, which has been eſteemed the beſt, and for aught I know, may maintain that Character till a new one appears: It is not ſafe to cenſure an Author of ſo eſtabliſhed a Reputation;

tation; only thus much a Man may venture to ſay, that it ſeems to be too ſtrong Phyſick for moſt Mens Conſtitutions; and it looks ſo like a Mountebank to boaſt of infallible Cures *(r)*, that I could not but have a leſs Opinion of this Author. He makes light Account of the former Logicians; and Perception, which was thought to be ſo clear a Mark of Truth, is ſhewn by him to be often the Effect of Imagination *(s)*, and therefore he fetcheth his *Criterion* higher, which he placeth in *Conception*, or a yet higher Degree of Cogitation. But whether Knowledge be grounded in Perception or *Conception*, ſeems not very material, provided they could ſhew us the Way, how to find it: This is what we deſire! And the telling us, we muſt aſſent to nothing, of which we have not a *Conception*, does not ſeem to further our Search over-much. It ſerves well to another Purpoſe, to ſhew us the Shortneſs of our Reach; for if we muſt aſſent to nothing without *Conception*, we muſt needs know very little, there being few Things, that we conceive perfectly. I

(r) *Medicin. Ment. Præf.*

(s) *Ib. Par. 2. p. 43.*

am

am apt to think Mr. *T.* has borrowed ſome Hints from this Author, though he has apply'd them to Purpoſes the Author never meant, and indeed flatly diſavows: For the Author ſeems to mean well, only is too fanciful a Man, to make an extraordinary Logician; and whoever reads his *Medicina Corporis* will be confirmed in this Opinion: If his Rules of Reaſon be not better ſuited to the Mind, than his Rules for Health are fitted to our Bodies, he is not like to be much follow'd.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Of MORAL PHILOSOPHY.

MORALITY may be conſidered two Ways, as an Habit, or a Rule, either as it is in us, or as an Art for the Conduct of Life, and a Doctrine of Manners: In both Reſpects it is very imperfect, if conſidered only in its own Strength, and without the Aſſiſtances of Revelation; Philoſophy being as unable to give Rules, as Nature is to practiſe them. Moſt of the Philoſophers, and ſome of groſſer Capacities, were ſenſible of this: They were ſo far bewildred in their Search after Happineſs, as to be able

able to perceive their own Wanderings, and could feel the Diſorders of their Nature. But how to return into the Way, or remedy theſe Diſorders, was beyond their Power.

SOCRATES was the firſt, who, after the Philoſophers had tir'd themſelves out in the Search of Nature, with little Succeſs, obſerving the great Uncertainties and Vanity of ſuch Inquiries, brought down Philoſophy from fruitleſs Speculations, to the Uſes of Life: His Opinions in Morality were clearer and much better grounded, than thoſe of moſt of the ſucceeding Sects; having had truer Notions of GOD, of the Immortality of the Soul, and future Rewards, than the reſt had; without which all Virtue is a floating, unſtable Thing, wanting both its due End and ſufficient Foundation. But though he was clearer than moſt of the reſt were, yet he expreſſes himſelf too doubtfully to be depended on. Moſt of his Philoſophy is in broken Sentences, delivered with much Doubtfulneſs, and his dying Words are well

well known, when he had leaſt to fear, which are ſo full of Diffidence, that they can give little Encouragement to others to follow him. He propoſeth his Senſe, as a probable Opinion, of the Truth whereof he had conceived good Hopes, from its Agreeableneſs with the Divine Goodneſs, and the Order of Providence; rather than built upon ſuch ſolid Principles, as would give Aſſurance, and bear Men up in the Diſcharge of their Duty, where it meets with Reproaches and Diſcouragements, the uſual Attendants of Virtue.

PLATO does little more than copy from his Maſter, and being awed by his hard Fate, ſpeaks yet with more Reſerve: His moſt Divine Dialogue, is chiefly a Relation of *Socrates*'s Opinions, and an Account of the Diſcourſes he had with his Scholars, ſome time before he died *(t)*. And both the *Socratic* and *Platonic* Way having been Enemies to Dogmatiſing, and rather doubting and denying than aſſerting any thing; we are not

(t) V. Platon. Phædon.

not to expect Certainty, where it is not pretended to.

ARISTOTLE is more noted for his Order in bringing Morality into Syſtem, by treating of Happineſs under Heads, and ranging it in Claſſes according to its different Objects, and diſtinguiſhing Virtues into their ſeveral Kinds, which had not been handled ſyſtematically before, than for any real Improvement he made in this ſort of Knowledge: Which was a diviner Thing in *Plato*'s Dialogues, although only lax and moral Diſcourſes, than it was under all the Advantages that *Ariſtotle* could give it by reducing it into Order; whilſt he wanted the only Thing that could could render it amiable.

As for the reſt of the Philoſophers, they generally go upon falſe Principles: That Sect of them, which was ſtricteſt in its Inſtitution, and pretended to the greateſt Perfection, the *Stoics*, were more extravagant than moſt others were: Their Rule was to live up to Nature,

which as they underſtood it, was to diveſt themſelves of Humanity; for that was to be laid aſide, and an abſolute Unconcernedneſs to be embraced, in order to the Happineſs they were to be poſſeſſed of: Their wiſe Man was to be Rich and Powerful, and every way Happy in the midſt of Torments: All Good with them was equal and alike; only their wiſe Man was ſomewhat above the Gods *(u)*. In ſhort, their Philoſophy was all Paradox, it made a great Shew, and dazzled thoſe that looked no farther than Appearance, but was nothing more at the Bottom, than an Oſtentation of Wiſdom.

(u) *V. Sen. Ep. 53. Eſt aliquid quo Sapiens antecedat Deum.*

It were too tedious to recount the various Opinions of the Heathen Moraliſts, which in ſhort Compaſs of Time were grown ſo numerous, that it gave Occaſion to the *Sceptics*, to diſpute the Truth of all, and to maintain that there was nothing True or Falſe, Good or Evil; and conſequently to place their Happineſs in a perfect *Indifference*, an ἀταραξία in the Underſtanding; and μετριοπάθεια

τριοπαθεια in the Will (*x*). This was to go beyond the *Stoics*, who as they could feel no Pain, ſo theſe romantick Heroes could taſte Happineſs without being affected with Pleaſure. Their Maſter *Pyrrhon*, who flouriſhed about the Time of *Zeno*, was ſo ſtruck with this Principle, that if a Chariot or wild Beaſt came in his Way, he ſcorned to turn aſide, and muſt often have periſhed, had he not been preſerved by his Friends. He was beſt anſwered by the Dog in *Diogenes Laertius* (*y*), which coming upon him by Surpriſe, ere the Philoſopher had Time to conſider, made Nature ſtart back, and the Philoſopher confeſs, that ſuch imaginary Principles will not hold.

(*x*) *V. Sex. Empiric. L.* 1. *c.* 12.

(*y*) *Lib.* 9. *Vit. Pyrrhon.*

IN *Varro*'s Time the different Opinions were ſo extravagantly multiplied, that in his Book of Philoſophy (*z*), he reckons up two hundred and eighty-eight ſeveral Opinions, only concerning the *Summum Bonum*. And if the Difference were ſo great concerning the ultimate End, which all Men deſire, and

(*z*) *V. Aug. de Civ. Dei, L.* 19. *c.* 1.

in which, if any thing, the common Senſe of Mankind ſhould ſeem to agree; we may eaſily imagine what Agreement there was, in other leſs Ends and particular Duties. I need not ſhew it, it is a common Theme, and may be ſeen in every Treatiſe of Morality.

BUT though Morality may have been very imperfect amongſt the Philoſophers, it is otherwiſe, I ſuppoſe, with us, who have better Light and a ſurer Rule for our Direction, than they had: It is true it is ſo, whilſt we keep to our Rule, but when we forſake that, we go aſtray like other Men. Our Modern Caſuiſts, eſpecially the *Jeſuiſts*, afford too clear an Evidence of this, who by ſtarting nice Caſes, and philoſophiſing upon them, have brought us back in ſome Things to the State of Philoſophers: They have already given us a new Notion of Philoſophical Sin, which as ſtated by them has no ſuch Sting in it, as to deter moſt Men from its Commiſſion. Their Theſes are printed, that were to be maintained by the *Jeſuits* at *Dijon*; the firſt of which

which is, *Peccatum Philoſophicum ſeu morale, eſt Actus humanus diſconveniens Naturæ Rationali & Rectæ Rationi: Theologicum verò & mortale eſt tranſgreſſio libera legis Divinæ: Philoſophicum quantumvis grave, in illo qui Deum vel ignorat, vel de Deo actu non cogitat, eſt grave Peccatum, ſed non eſt offenſa Dei, neque Peccatum mortale diſſolvens amicitiam Dei, neque æternâ pœnâ dignum:* A Theſis indeed very favourable to the Heathen Philoſophers, but impoſſible to be reconciled to the Principles of the Goſpel. It has been reprinted at the *Hague (a)*, and ſufficiently anſwered and expoſed by a good Hand, though nothing can expoſe it more than naming it.

(a) *Nouv. Her. dans la Moral. A la Haye* 89.

THIS is only one of their Caſuiſtical Deciſions; a large Collection of which may be had in the *Jeſuits Morals (b)*, which as repreſented by a Doctor of the *Sorbonne*, and he quotes their own licenſed Authors, is ſuch a Syſtem of Morality, as the Heathen Philoſophers would bluſh to own. According to the

(b) *Morals des Jeſ. A Mons.* 1667.

Doctrine of that *Moral*, how many Sins are there, that may be committed, and what Duties that may not be evaded in ſome Degree, or under ſome Diſtinction? Their one Doctrine of *Probability*, is a Ground of as much Liberty, as an ordinary Sinner can deſire: For if a Man may act upon a probable Opinion, and an Opinion becomes then probable, when it is ſupported by one Reaſon, or maintain'd only by one Doctor (c), I will venture to affirm, there are few Things ſo hard in Morality, that have been defended by the looſeſt Moraliſts, that have not been maintained by ſome of the *Jeſuiſts*, as cited in that Book. And yet this is not the utmoſt Liberty, theſe nice Caſuiſts and indulgent Fathers have allowed: They go farther, and where there are two probable Opinions, a Man may act upon that which is leſs probable, nay, he may venture upon an Opinion that is only probably probable; which is certainly as low a Degree of Probability, as can well be imagined; and I do not ſee, how they can go lower, unleſs they would

(c) *V. Moral. p.* 148, 158.

would allow a Man to act upon an Opinion that is improbable.

IT might have been expected, that where ſo many hard Opinions have been charged upon the *Jeſuits*, as have been produced in the *Jeſuits Morals*, they ſhould ſay ſomewhat in their own Defence: Somewhat indeed they have ſaid, and one of the Pleas they inſiſt upon moſt is, that many of the ſame Opinions are maintained by the Schoolmen, ſome of whom were canonized, and their Books generally received in the Church of *Rome*. But whatever Opinion they may have of ſuch a Defence, it is nothing to us, who bring the ſame Charge againſt the Schoolmen, that we do againſt the *Jeſuiſts*, as far as they maintain the ſame Opinions, and we think them the more dangerous, if they have not only been defended by *Jeſuiſts*, but by ſuch Men, as by having been received into the Catalogue of *Romiſh Saints*, have in a manner canonized their Opinions, by being canonized themſelves, and made their Church in ſome meaſure anſwerable for them: Though to

do that Church right, others of her Members have taken Offence at ſuch Doctrines, particularly the *Janſeniſts*; and among the Benedictins, Father *Mabillon*, tho' otherwiſe reſerved enough in his Cenſures, yet where ſuch looſe Caſuiſts come in his Way, cannot forbear giving them a Laſh, and declaring it his Opinion, that a Man may read *Tully's Offices* with more Profit than he can do certain Caſuiſts *(d)*: Which though ſmart enough, as coming from a moſt humble Man, yet another *Frenchman* has ſaid a ſeverer Thing; where he defines Morality as treated by the Caſuiſts, *L' Art de chicaner avec Dieu*; and indeed in their way of handling, it looks liker an Art to eaſe Men from the Burden of rigorous Precepts, by ſhewing them the utmoſt Bounds they may go without Sin, than what it ſhould be, a Direction for the Eaſe of tender Conſciences, by ſhewing Men their Duty in particular Caſes.

(d) *Etud. Monaſt. Par.* 2. *c.* 7.

To ſpeak the whole Matter in one Word; a good Conſcience and an upright Man will ſee his Duty with only a moderate Share of caſuiſtical Skill, but into

into a perverſe Heart, this ſort of Wiſdom enters not: It is uſually ſome Luſt to be gratified, or Danger to be avoided, which perverts the Judgment in practical Duties: But were Men as much afraid of Sin, as they are of Danger, there would be few Occaſions of conſulting our Caſuiſts.

CHAP. VII.

Of NATURAL PHILOSOPHY.

PHYSICAL Knowledge, taking in the whole Compaſs of Nature, is too vaſt a Subject to be comprehended by the Human Mind; it is an unexhauſtible Mine, wherein we always dig, and yet never come at the Bottom: For though the Things it treats of be material Objects, and as ſuch, ſenſible and eaſy; yet when we come to treat of them in a philoſophical Manner, they ſhun our Senſe, and are liable to equal Difficulties with nicer Matters. There is nothing more common in Nature, than Matter and Motion, or more eaſily diſtin-

diſtinguiſhed; but then we muſt underſtand them to be ſo, only in their groſſer Meaning; for if we ſpeak of ſubtle Matter and *inteſtine* Motion, they eſcape the niceſt Scrutiny of Senſe: And yet theſe are the ſecret Springs of moſt of the Operations in Nature; and as for groſs Matter and viſible Motion, they are rather of mechanical Conſideration. A Philoſopher's Buſineſs is to trace Nature in her inward Receſſes and latent Motions; and how hid theſe are, is beſt known to thoſe, who are moſt converſant in philoſophical Inquiries. Such Men by looking deep into her, and obſerving her in all her Windings and Mazes, find Matter enough for Wonder, and Reaſou to adore the Wiſdom of GOD, but at the ſame time only meet with Mortification to their own Wiſdom, and are forced to confeſs, that the Ways of Nature, like thoſe of GOD, are paſt Man's finding out.

ARISTOTLE, who has gone ſo far in his rational Inquiries, has given us little Inſight into Phyſical Truths; for

for having framed a Body of Phyſicks out of his own Head, all the various *Phænomena* of Nature were to be ſuited to his Philoſophy, inſtead of his Philoſophy's being drawn from Obſervations in Nature: His Reaſoning, which did well in Logicks, was ſomewhat out of Place, and miſguided him here, where he was rather to be led by Obſervation; and where he does make Obſervations they are uſually unphiloſophical, and ſuch as few Men could be ignorant of: His four Elements are groſs Things, and leave the Underſtanding at the ſame Pitch where it was, and his three Principles do not advance it much higher: His firſt Principle as he has explained it, is unintelligible; and the laſt of the three is no Principle at all, unleſs we will allow that for one Principle, that is deſtructive of another: He tells us, that all Knowledge is to be derived from the Senſe, and yet preſently forſakes that, and flies to Reaſon. But his Philoſophy is enough decry'd already, and needs not be brought lower than it is.

I NEED not here reckon up the Opinions of other Ancient Philoſophers; moſt of them have been revived, and have been again confuted, and have died the ſecond Time in our own Age. The Opinion of *Thales* and the *Ionic* Sect, in making Water the Principle of all things, has been revived by thoſe, who have attempted to explicate a Deluge from ſuch an Original. And the Opinion of *Pythagoras* and the *Italic* Sect, in placing the Sun in the Centre of the World, and aſcribing Motion to the Earth, has been maintained anew by *Copernicus* and his Followers; and tho' *Tranſmigration* of Souls be one of *Pythagoras*'s hardeſt Sayings, yet it has found a Patron of late in a Countryman of our own *(e)*, who has maintained it in a qualified Senſe, which perhaps was as much as *Pythagoras* meant. An *Anima Mundi*, Pre-exiſtence of Souls, with the reſt of *Plato*'s Opinions, have found a ſtrong Party in their Defence: And many other late Opinions, which have little in them, except their Novelty, to recom-

(e) *Mr. Bulſtrode.*

recommend them to the World, do really want that too, and might be eaſily ſhewn, to be only the Spawn of the Ancient Philoſophers; by whom as there is nothing ſo abſurd, that has not been ſaid, ſo they have ſcarce ſaid any thing ſo extravagant, wherein they have not been followed.

BUT among all the Ancient Opinions, none have been reviv'd with more general Approbation, than thoſe of *Democritus* and *Epicurus*, the Founders of the Atomical or Corpuſcular Philoſophy; an ill Omen to Religion, when they who have explicated the Production of the World, by the Laws of Mechaniſm, without a GOD, have been ſo generaly followed. In this Mr. *Des Cartes* has been too ſucceſsful, whom though it would be very unjuſt to charge with the Denial of a GOD, whom he ſuppoſeth to have created Matter, and to have impreſſed the firſt Motion upon it; yet in this he is blameable, that after the firſt Motion is impreſſed, and the Wheels ſet a-going, he leaves his vaſt Machine to the

the Laws of Mechaniſm, and ſuppoſeth that all things may be thereby produced, without any further extraordinary Aſſiſtance from the firſt Impreſſor. The Suppoſition is impious, and, as he ſtates it, deſtructive of itſelf: For, not to deny him his Laws of Motion, moſt of which have been evidently ſhewn to be falſe, and conſequently ſo muſt all be that is built upon them, his Notion of Matter is inconſiſtent with any Motion at all; for as Space and Matter are with him the ſame, upon this Suppoſition there can be no *Vacuum*, and there can be no Motion in a *Plenum:* Motion is only the Succeſſion of Bodies from one Place to another; but how ſhould they ſucceed from one Place, if there be no room to receive them in the next, which there cannot be, if all be full? And the Difficulty is ſtill greater upon the firſt framing of Things, before the ſubtle Matter is produced, that was to ſuit itſelf to all the little Interſtices, betwixt the larger ſolid Bodies, which muſt needs clog and interfere with one another, unleſs we will allow ſome fluid Matter, that will yield

yield and give way to the other's Motion. Mr. *Des Cartes* imagines he anſwers all this, by a Succeſſion of Bodies in a circular Motion; but I think this Motion carries its own Confutation with it, and that nothing can be ſuppoſed more abſurd, than to imagine, that upon the Motion of every little Atom, the whole Frame of Things muſt be diſturbed and ſet a-going. Motion is one of Mr. *Des Cartes*'s darling Principles, and by this and Matter, he pretends to ſolve the greateſt Difficulties that are in Nature; and it is very remarkable, that he has not fail'd more in any of his Notions, than in theſe two great Fundamentals of his Philoſophy; for allowing him theſe, his other Explications hang together ſomewhat better. But this it is to frame *Hypotheſes* out of one's own Imagination, without conſulting Nature, which Mr. *Des Cartes* has not done, for it was equal to him, what *Hypotheſes* he went upon; and had Father *Merſennus* (*f*) told him that a *Vacuum* was as much in faſhion, and as agreeable to the Taſte of the Age, as a *Plenum* then ſeemed to be,

(*f*) *V. Rapin. Reflex. p.* 123.

we ſhould have had an *Hypotheſis* grounded upon a *Vacuum*, and no doubt as ſpecious and plauſible, being more conſonant to his own Senſe, as having been his firſt Deſign, and the other only hammered out by the Direction of his Confident *Marſennus*. And it is a wonderful Thing, that Men ſhould run mad after ſuch an *Hypotheſis*, which as it has not the leaſt Ground in Nature, ſo the Author himſelf never believed it. It has been anſwered and effectually confuted in all its Branches, by ſeveral Hands, but by none better than the Author of, *A Voyage to the World of* Des Cartes, which though not always concluſive, is every where ingenious, and confutes him in his own Way; for one Romance is beſt anſwered by another.

BUT we have been taught to diſtinguiſh betwixt *Hypotheſes* and *Theories*, the latter of which are ſhrewd Things, as being built upon Obſervations in Nature, whereas *Hypotheſes* may be only Chimera's: I ſhould be glad to ſee that

Theory,

Theory, that is built upon ſuch Obſervations. The moſt plauſible *Theory*, I have yet met with, is only built upon an *Hypotheſis*, to wit, the Incruſtation of the Earth, and the Cracking of its *Cortex*, the very ſame in Subſtance we have been ſpeaking of; and how this *Theory* ſhould be more certain, than the *Hypotheſis* it goes upon, is paſt my Underſtanding. Thus much I believe may be ſaid of all our *Theories*, That however natural they may ſeem at firſt View, they have always ſome Mark in Nature ſet upon them, to diſcover them to be falſe. Thus Dr. *B*—'s *Theory* of the Incruſtation of the Earth is very ingenious, but then there is no ſufficient Proviſion made for Antediluvian Waters, much leſs for Springs and Rivers, which can neither be generated, nor flow in Streams without Mountains. Mr. *W*—'s *Theory* ſhews a vaſt Reach and Depth in its Contrivance, both in his accounting for the Formation of Things, and in his Explication of a Deluge; but his Paradiſiacal Days are ſo long, by his allowing only an

Annual

Annual Motion to the Earth in that State, as to exceed all Belief; and though he makes a tolerable ſhift to ſupply us with ſuch Stores of Waters, from the *Atmoſphere* of a Comet, as might occaſion a Deluge, yet it is impoſſible for him to carry them off again, after the Occaſion is over; and for aught I can ſee, they muſt have continued with us, till the Return of his Comet. So that whatever Differences may be alledged betwixt *Hypotheſes* and *Theories*, they are much upon the ſame Level, as to any real Light they have yet afforded to Nature; and one great Difference ſeems to be this, that the former are only modeſtly propoſed, whereas *Theories* are uſher'd in with greater Aſſurance. It is well if *Theories* be not as much out of Faſhion in the next Age, as *Hypotheſes* are in this; for ſo many Obſervations and Experiments are required to raiſe a *Theory*, that I deſpair of ever ſeeing One that will bear the Teſt.

WHEN I ſpeak of Obſervations and Experiments, I would not be thought to

undervalue a Society, which has been erected to that Purpoſe, and whoſe Endeavours have been ſo ſucceſsful that way already: But however ſucceſsful they may have been, thoſe excellent Perſons have more Modeſty, than to over-rate their own Performances; and nothing has done them more Injury, than the Vanity of ſome few Men, who have been ſo *Planet-ſtruck*, as to dream of the Poſſibility of a Voyage to the Moon, and to talk of making Wings to fly thither, as they would of buying a pair of Boots to take a Journey *(g)*. The genuine Members of that Society have other Thoughts of Things, being far from any Hopes of maſtering Nature, or of ever making ſuch Progreſs, as not to leave Work enough for other Men to do. One of their Number, a great Glory of their Society, after he had grown old in their Studies, learnt Modeſty and Diffidence thereby, and was never more reſerv'd than in his full Growth and Maturity of Knowledge, when he had leaſt Reaſon to be ſo. And another incomparable Perſon, who has added Mathematical

(g) Mr. G's Scep. Sc. p. 134.

tical Skill to his Obſervation upon Nature, after the niceſt Inquiry, ſeems to reſolve all into *Attraction*; which though it may be true, and pious withal, perhaps will not be thought ſo philoſophical.

THE Truth of it is, we may as well reſt there, for after all, Gravitation was never yet ſolved, and poſſibly never may; and after Men have ſpent a thouſand Years longer in theſe Inquiries, they may perhaps ſit down at laſt under *Attraction*, or may be content to reſolve all into the Power or Providence of GOD. And might not that be done as well now? We know little of the Cauſes of Things, but may ſee Wiſdom enough in every thing: And could we be content to ſpend as much Time in contemplating the wiſe Ends of Providence, as we do in ſearching into Cauſes, it would certainly make us better Men, and, I am apt to think, no worſe Philoſophers. For tho' final Cauſes have been ſo much baniſhed from our Modern Phyſicks, yet nothing is more to the Purpoſe, or more eaſy to be underſtood. Whereas

Cauſes are yet latent; and it is very remarkable, that the very laſt Author *(b)* that has given us a Syſtem of Phyſicks, after all the Diſcoveries that have been talked of, and Improvements that have been made in Nature, has been forced to proceed in an *Analytical* Method, for want of Principles to go upon; and inſtead of demonſtrating Effects from the Cauſes, has been forced to trace the Cauſes of Things from their Effects: Which tho' it be ſome Argument of the Author's Modeſty, yet I do not ſpeak it to commend his Performance, for his Phyſicks are like his other Works, faulty enough.

(*b*) *M. le Clerc.*

CHAP. VIII.

Of ASTRONOMY.

THE *Chaldeans* were the firſt (unleſs you will except the *Chineſe)* that we meet with in Prophane Stories *(i)*, that made Obſervations upon the Stars: Two Reaſons might incline them to this; Firſt, the Evenneſs of their Country, which afforded a free and open Proſpect; and next, the Opinion they had of the Stars, whom eſteeming as Gods, it muſt have been a Part of their Religion to look up to Heaven and obſerve them. But then their Obſervations were principally Aſtrological; they did not ſo much meaſure the Heavens, as fetch their Directions from thence, and were more concerned for the Influences of the Stars,

(i) *Cicer. de Divin. L.* 1. *p.* 1.

than their Motions: So that though Aſtrology were at its full Height amongſt the *Chaldeans*, yet Aſtronomy never ſeems to have arrived at any Maturity. The ſame may be ſaid of moſt of the Eaſtern People; even the *Chineſe*, after they have made Obſervations upon the Stars above Four Thouſand Years, yet have made ſo little Progreſs in Aſtronomy, that upon the Arrival of the *Miſſionaries*, their Mathematicians could not compoſe a perfect Calendar *(k)*.

(k) Le Compt. nouv. Memoir. Let 3. p. 100.

THE two *Hypotheſes* of *Ptolemy* and *Copernicus* will take in moſt of what needs be ſaid on this Subject; for as to that of *Tycho Brahe*, as it is in a great Meaſure compounded of theſe two, and ſeems deſigned to account for Difficulties in both theſe *Hypotheſes*, ſo it is liable to ſeveral Objections in them both.

THE *Ptolemaick* Hypotheſis has too much Appearance of Art, to be eſteemed Natural, all its *Epicycles* and *Eccentrics*, and other *Ambages*, can never be thought the

the Contrivance of Nature, which acts in a more ſimple Manner, without going ſo far about; thoſe ſolid Spheres which it ſuppoſes, have been ſhattered and overturned by the Modern Philoſophers, and ſhewn to be inconſiſtent both with the *Trajection* of Comets, and with that equal Light, which is conveyed to us from the Planets and other Stars, which by paſſing through ſuch different *Mediums* and ſolid Bodies, muſt have ſuffered innumerable Refractions: Several of the Phænomena of the Heavens admit of no tolerable Solution this Way, particularly thoſe of *Mercury* and *Venus*, and the Acceſs and Receſs of the Polar Star to and from the Pole, which in the Time of *Hypparchus*, was diſtant from it twelve Degrees, but is not now fully three, and in Proceſs of Time will recede from it again more than ever; and the many different, and likewiſe oppoſite Motions of the Stars and Spheres are not eaſily conceived. But nothing is ſo inconceivable as the Velocity of their Motion; for upon this Hypotheſis they muſt be ſuppoſed to move ſome Thou-

ſand Miles in a Minute, which though it may be conceived by Philoſophers, is not very obvious to common Underſtandings. Such are the Objections that have been commonly brought againſt this Hypotheſis, which have rendered it ſo hard of Digeſtion, and though nothing can excuſe the hard Saying of that Prophane King *(l)*, ſo well known and ſo ofted quoted, yet it may be ſo far mollified, that having been levelled againſt this Hypotheſis, he did not thereby pretend to correct the Works of GOD Almighty, only did not believe them to have been framed in ſuch a Manner by GOD, as *Ptolemy* has deſcribed.

(l) *Alphonſus of* Caſtile.

THE *Copernican Hypotheſis* values itſelf upon its Eaſineſs, and the great Compendiouſneſs of the Way it goes in: But though it accounts for Appearances more compendiouſly than the other does, and without the vaſt *Apparatus* that is required in the *Ptolemaick* Hypotheſis, yet it contains Things as incomprehenſible as the other does: For as the Celerity of Motion in the former exceeds all Belief,

Belief, ſo the Regularity of Motion is unfathomable in this. The Motion of the Earth is of hard enough Digeſtion in itſelf; but ſuppoſing it to move in a fluid *Medium*, who is there that can imagine, that it ſhould be ſo regular and uniform as it is? The Fluid, with which it is environ'd, and in which it moves, is unſtable and mutable, conſiſting of little Bodies, that are always altering their Poſition to one another, and changing their Shapes by conſtant and mutual Attrition; and yet tho' the Ambient Fluid be always altering, the Motion is the ſame. It deſcribes our Days by its Diurnal Motion upon its own Axis, our Years, by its Annual Revolution, and our Seaſons, by that and its Inclination, and all theſe ſo regularly, as not to vary in ſo many Succeſſions of Ages; and yet we muſt believe that this Conſtancy and Regularity is maintained by fluctuating Matter, the moſt unſtable thing in the World. The exacteſt Movements or Machines that human Wit can frame, are ſubject to innumerable Diſorders, either from the breaking of the

the Spring of their Motion, or wearing of their Wheels, or ſome other external Impulſe or inward Decay, and therefore always want our Care, either to ſet them right, or keep them in order; only this vaſt Machine and Frame of Things, preſerves its Courſe, and never varies, though acted in Appearance by the moſt unconſtant Cauſes. A Man that well conſiders this will be inclined to entertain a more favourable Opinion of the Ancient Philoſophers; and though he cannot believe the Heavens to be turned and acted by *Intelligences*, yet he would find it almoſt as hard to apprehend, how they move without them: Whatever become of Intelligences, an intelligent Being muſt of neceſſity be taken in, without which our Philoſophy will be very unable to do the Buſineſs.

THERE is another Difficulty in this Hypotheſis, which the *Copernicans* cannot eaſily get over, and which will perplex any Man's Underſtanding that well conſiders it: That the Earth is only a Point in reſpect to the Univerſe, though it be

be a pretty large *Poſtulatum*, yet poſſibly muſt be granted upon any Hypotheſis; but that not only the Earth, but the whole *Magnus Orbis*, or that vaſt Orbit which the Earth deſcribes round the Sun, ſhould be eſteemed a Point, (without which Suppoſition the *Copernican* Hypotheſis cannot be maintained) is ſuch a *Poſtulatum* in Aſtronomy, as the more a Man thinks of, the leſs eaſily he can aſſent to. For what is the *Magnus Orbis*, or vaſt Circle, which muſt be eſteemed as a Point? To take only the Semidiameter of this Circle, or about the ſixth Part of the Whole, *Hugenius (m)*, no incompetent Judge of theſe Matters, has calculated the Diſtance betwixt the Earth and the Sun to about ſeventeen Million *German* Miles; or in other Words, that ſuppoſing a Bullet ſhot from a Gun could retain always the ſame Velocity it had at its firſt Diſcharge, with this Swiftneſs in about twenty-five Years, it would paſs from the Earth to the Sun: All which immenſe Diſtance, is about a ſixth Part of *Copernicus*'s Point. It is true, *Huge-*

(m) *Coſmotheor. p.* 124.

nius aſſigns a proportionable Diſtance (if there can be any Proportion in ſuch an Immenſity) to the fix'd Stars; for this Bullet being ſhot again, with the ſame Swiftneſs, he *(n)* ſuppoſes, it might come at the neareſt of the fixed Stars in about 700 Years, which is ſuch a Diſtance as common Apprehenſions cannot reach, and will once more require a Philoſopher's Underſtanding.

(n) *Ibid.* p. 137.

In this vaſt Compaſs, our Aſtronomers have diſcovered new Worlds (like that ſanguine Conqueror who was ſeeking out new Worlds before the old one was half ſubdued;) every Planet muſt be a World, and every Star muſt have its Planets: This Project was purſued by Mr. *Fontenelle* in a pleaſing entertaining Way, but has been embraced by others with greater Serioufneſs. What theſe Worlds are, might as well be left undetermined, GOD having thought fit to ſay little of them, and having placed them beyond our Reach: But if we may gueſs at the Diſcoveries that are to be made in the remoteſt Stars, from thoſe that

that have been made already in the neareſt, the Moon, I do not think they will make any great Addition to Knowledge. It muſt be confeſs'd, that mighty Diſcoveries have been talked of in that Planet: *Hevelius* has given us his Geography, and has marked out (*o*) every Mountain and Valley, Sea, and River, as exactly as if he had been there, in his accurate Map of that World. *Ricciolus* (*p*) has gone a little farther, and has aſſigned every Aſtronomer his Proportion of Ground: You may there meet with the Land of *Copernicus*, *Galilæus* and *Keplar*; and it is but juſt that they ſhould have the Benefit of their Invention: And the ſame Author, to ſhew his Modeſty, has placed *Ricciolus* in the beſt and moſt conſpicuous Spot of Ground in that World. But are theſe Men in earneſt? Or do we yet know where we are? That the Moon is an Opake Body is no new Diſcovery, the Nature of Eclipſes has long ſince ſhewn it, and I am afraid it is little we yet know beyond this. For though the Moon has been divided into Sea and Land,

(*o*) *Selenographi.* p. 226.

(*p*.) *Almageſt.* 204.

Land, and the Diviſion ſo much acknowledged, that a Man's Parts muſt have been ſuſpected, that would have doubted of the Thing; and tho' the obſcure Parts of its Body have been generally thought to be watry, and the luminous Parts earthy and ſolid; yet this Diviſion ſeems rather to be grounded upon an Inference of Reaſon, to wit, That the obſcure and watry Parts imbibe the Light, whereas the earthy ſolid Parts reflect it, than upon the Experience of Senſe, aſſiſted by Glaſſes. Theſe Glaſſes indeed diſcover the Difference betwixt the dark and luminous Parts much more clearly than the naked Eye can, but will never ſhew the Nature of either, or what Subſtance they are of, much leſs diſtinguiſh the different Portions of Earth and Water: But Men come poſſeſſed with an Opinion of Seas and Rivers, and then eaſily think they ſee them (as every Sound does anſwer the Tune that runs in our Ears) and after one Man has ſeen them, it is a Reproach to the next, not to be as acute and diſtinguiſhing as he, and

ſo

ſo we cheat one another into a tolerable Agreement. That this is the Caſe I am verily perſwaded: For though I can neither pretend to good Eyes, nor good Glaſſes, and therefore will lay no Weight upon my own Opinion, yet *Hugenius*, who had them in Perfection, and who writ ſince theſe accurate Maps were taken, could neither obſerve Seas nor Rivers in the Moon, and expreſsly denies, that any ſuch are to be ſeen there *(q)*. And there is this Reaſon beſides, that if any ſuch were, they muſt neceſſarily raiſe a mighty *Atmoſphere*, which, as it would hinder our clear Proſpect at all Times, ſo by its Clouds, it would ſometimes darken one Part of the Moon's Body, and ſometimes another; whereas now the dark and luminous Parts are always the ſame: So that, as far as I can ſee, we know little more of the Moon, than that it is an opake and ſolid Body, and ſo much we were pretty well aſſured of, before *Teleſcopes* came in faſhion.

(q) *Coſmotheor.* *p.* 114.

No

No doubt Teleſcopes are a noble Invention, and the Diſcoveries that have been made by them are very conſiderable; but as to the diſcovering thereby the Nature and Subſtance of heavenly Bodies, I look upon it as utterly impoſſible: And yet this is the modiſh Way of framing new Worlds: We firſt obſerve Seas and Rivers in the Moon, and if ſuch be there, there muſt be Plants, that they water, and if Plants, there muſt likewiſe be Animals to feed upon them, and all theſe are deſigned for the Service of Men. The Reaſon is eaſily carried further: for if the Moon be a World, by Parity of Reaſon, ſo muſt the other Planets be alſo: and if all the viſible Planets are carried about in the Vortex of the Sun, which is no better than the other Stars, no doubt, the other fixed Stars have their attending Planets, as well as the Sun, and ſo we have a Plurality of Worlds with a Witneſs. But this Chain of Reaſoning is eaſily broken, by breaking its firſt Link: For if there be no Waters in the Moon, in Conſequence

ſequence of that, neither are there any Plants or Animals, or Men; and if none of theſe be there, by Parity of Reaſon, neither are there any in the other Planets, and ſo the whole Chain falls to pieces.

THESE World-Mongers are always objecting the Improbability of GOD's framing ſo many vaſt and glorious Bodies, only for the ſake of this Earth, ſo inconſiderable a Portion of the Whole: Amongſt the reſt *Hugenius*, who in one Place makes this Objection, in another Part of his Book *(r)*, as if he had forgot himſelf, thinks it enough to ſay, that GOD raiſed this mighty Frame of Things, that he might contemplate and delight himſelf thereby; and were there no other Reaſon, we ought to acquieſce in this. But they that argue thus, ſeem to meaſure Things by their Bulk, which is a falſe way of reaſoning: There is more Beauty and Contrivance in the Structure of a human Body, than there is in the glorious Body of the Sun; and more Perfection in one rational immaterial

(r) p. 33.

terial Soul, than in the whole Maſs of Matter, be it never ſo bulky. There cannot then be any Abſurdity in ſaying, That all things were created for the ſake of this inferior World, and the Inhabitants thereof; and they that have ſuch mean Thoughts of it, ſeem not to have conſidered who it was that died to redeem it. Let them meaſure the World by that Standard, and they cannot undervalue it any longer, without ſome Reproach to infinite Wiſdom.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Of METAPHYSICKS.

METAPHYSICKS having ſo great an Affinity with Logick, and being ſo interwoven with the Learning of the Schools, I need ſay leſs of them in this Place: They are ſtiled by *Ariſtotle* Natural Theology, from whence we may be enabled to take ſome Meaſures of them: For Natural Theology is in itſelf a poor weak Thing, and Reaſon unaſſiſted has not been able to carry the cleareſt Philoſophers very far, in their Purſuit after Divine Matters: We have ſeen this already in practical Truth, and the Reaſon

lies ſtronger in ſuch as are ſpeculative. And if we ſee ſo dimly in Phyſical Matters, which are nearer our Senſe, and in a manner expoſed to View, how much more muſt we be bewildred in our Search after Spiritual abſtracted Truths, in the Conſideration of Univerſals, and of Things of a tranſcendental Nature, ſuch as fall properly under the Conſideration of Metaphyſicks? For tho' Metaphyſical Truths may be certain enough in their own Nature, yet they are not uſually ſo to us, but being abſtruſe Things, and lying deep and remote from Senſe, it is not every one that is capable of underſtanding them, and there are yet fewer that underſtand their true Uſe. They are uſually under the Conduct of ſubtle Men; and theſe nice Profeſſors, inſtead of reſolving Doubts, have ſpun out new Difficulties, and framed Labyrinths, out of which they have ſcarce been able to diſentangle themſelves: So that Metaphyſicks, which were at firſt only Natural Theology, are now become the moſt artificial Things in the World.

ONE need only dip into any Syſtem, to ſee how theſe Men are plunged in ſetting out; for whereas there are two Things of principal Conſideration in Metaphyſical Knowledge, its *Object* and *Affections*; and as Philoſophers are pretty well agreed about the Object of other Sciences, as that Quantity is the Object of Mathematicks, and Matter of Phyſicks, and ſo of the reſt; the Metaphyſicians have not come to any tolerable Agreement about the Object of this Science, or *Sapience*, or whatever you will call it. *Suarez* produceth ſix different Opinions, and himſelf brings the ſeventh, which is his own. And as to its Affections, they are again at a Plunge to find out Affections different from *Being*, (which ſeems to comprehend every thing) for if the *Affections* and *Subject* are the ſame, their Demonſtrations are identical, and prove nothing. But theſe are dry Conſiderations.

WHAT *Ariſtotle* has done upon this Subject, is much ſhort of a perfect Work,

and is rather an Eſſay, than a compleat Treatiſe; for though he has left fourteen Books upon the Subject, yet they are looſe and indigeſted, which is not uſual with *Ariſtotle*, where he has given his laſt Hand; and the two laſt are ſo foreign to his Deſign, and ſo unſuitable to the Place they ſtand in, that ſome have thought fit either to ſtrike them out of his Works, or to place them in a new Order: And indeed his twelfth Book ſhould ſeem to be his laſt, which concludes with his Notion of GOD and ſpiritual Beings; though none of his Books are Divine enough, to give a true Account of Natural Theology. It is plain, he wants Light in theſe Matters, and neither knows where to fix, nor what to determine; which is one Reaſon of the Obſcurity of his Books of Metaphyſicks, for no Man can write clearer than he thinks. And therefore his Commentators have often tugg'd in vain, in labouring to make out a Meaning, where poſſibly the Author himſelf was at a loſs. If any Man could have underſtood him, *Avicen* had the beſt Plea,

Plea, who was as ſubtle a Philoſopher, and ſtudied him as much as perhaps any Man ever did; and yet after he had read his Metaphyſicks forty Times over, and had them all by Heart, (which I will venture to ſay, is more than ever any Man will do again) he was forced to lay them aſide as unintelligible *(s)*. In one thing I muſt do him Right, that whereas he has been repreſented as too poſitive and dogmatical in his Opinions, it is the Fault of his Followers, not his: He begins theſe Books in a very different Manner: His third Book (for the two firſt are chiefly Prefatory) is taken up with Doubts, and the Title of the firſt Chapter is, *The Uſe of Doubting*; to do which well, he makes one Mark of a Philoſopher, and gives this Reaſon, becauſe unleſs a Man knows how to find out and ſtate a Difficulty, it is impoſſible to ſolve it; as a Man muſt ſee the Folds and Windings of a Knot, before he can untie it. So that the Art of Doubting is no new Invention, having been known to *Ariſtotle*, as well as the Moderns, with this Difference only, that he does it more

(s) *V. Vit. Avicen. p.* 3.

modeſtly, and is not ſo ſceptical, as the firſt mighty Pretender to this Way.

And becauſe we are come thus far, let us conſider this new Method of Knowledge by Doubting, upon which our modern Metaphyſicks turn ſo much, and of which our new Philoſophers talk ſo loudly. For my Part I can ſee no great Uſe either of their Doubting, or of the Knowledge it leads to. For what is it we muſt doubt of? Even of the moſt certain Truth in Nature, of the Verity of our own Bodies, as whether we have Hands, Arms and Legs (*t*). And what is the firſt Knowledge that reſults from this Doubting? That ſince I doubt, I am; for that which doubts, muſt itſelf neceſſarily have a Being. Now allowing all this, I do not think we are much the wiſer: For had ever any Man real Doubts of theſe Matters? Or did ever any Man in his Wits queſtion the Truth of his own Being? Such Doubts and ſuch Proofs are only fitted for melancholy Perſons, and I hope, we are not philoſophiſing at this Time of

(*t*) *Cart. Princip. p.* 2 *Meditat.* 1.

Day

Day to yield Conviction to ſuch Men. Evident Truths and firſt Principles may be reaſonably ſuppoſed; and indeed they muſt be ſuppoſed, for they are not capable of Proof, there being nothing clearer by which they may be proved; and for a Man to offer a Proof in ſuch Matters, may make a pompous Shew, but it is no real Advancement of Knowledge. The old Way of proceeding upon allowed Principles ſeems to me more rational than this Method of queſtioning every thing, till we have unſettled the firſt Grounds and Foundations of Truth: And however uſeful Doubting may be in Philoſophical Inquiries, it ought always to ſuppoſe a Ground, for a groundleſs Doubt is ſo far irrational.

AFTER our Philoſopher has done with Doubting, and has proved to us our own Exiſtence, he brings us at laſt to the Being of a GOD *(u)*, in which a great Part of his Metaphyſicks is ſpent; and I am ſo unwilling to weaken any Proof to that Purpoſe, that I ſhall paſs it over: Only thus much may be inoffenſively ſaid,

(u) Medit. 3.

ſaid, that his Proof from the *Idea*, is the abſtruſeſt and the leaſt concluſive Argument that has been brought; for though conſtant and univerſal Agreement in the Notion of a GOD, may be a good Argument to prove his Exiſtence, and familiar enough to the weakeſt Capacities, yet this *Idea*, as managed by our Author, is neither clear nor the moſt concluſive: For what is there of either, in the objective Perfection or Reality of this *Idea*, being greater than the formal Perfection or Reality in the Mind, and therefore that this *Idea* cannot proceed from thence, but muſt have ſome ſuperior Cauſe to produce it? When after all, this objective Reality is nothing more than an Operation of the Mind, or rather a Mode of its Operation, which is ſuch a Reality, as one would imagine, the Mind alone might be able to give it.

BUT this Philoſopher's Metaphyſicks are only Meditations, a compleat Treatiſe was to be given us by his Followers; amongſt whom *M. Poiret*, I know not how,

how, has obtained a Name: He has refin'd upon his Maſter, and is ſo full of Thinking, that he has made Cogitation to be the Subſtance of the Mind *(x)*, and in purſuance of this, the Eſſence of God to be likewiſe Cogitation; which with other odd Opinions, will hardly recommend him to conſidering Men. I always looked upon *M. Poiret* as a *Fanatick* in Philoſophy, and have been confirmed in my Opinion, by what has happened ſince; for as Fanaticiſm has no Bounds, he has ſince (if he be the ſame Man) expreſſed it in his Divinity, by licking up the Vomit, and adoring the Opinions of a ſilly Woman, of *whoſe Inſpiration he is as well aſſured, as of the Being of a God (y)*; an Expreſſion which nothing but Enthuſiaſm can excuſe from Blaſphemy. And therefore I have the more wondered to ſee a Compariſon formed betwixt *Plato* and *M. Poiret*, which I could have wiſh'd had been let alone.

(x) *Cogitat. Rat. L. 2. c. 3, 5.*

(y) *V. Bour. Det. Nat. 1. p. 10.*

I MUST rank *Mallebranche* in the ſame Order, whoſe *Recherche* has furniſhed out

out ſuch refin'd and abſtracted Metaphyſicks, as if they were deſigned for Comprehenſors; he has exalted *Ideas* to their utmoſt Height; and becauſe they bore not with them Certainty enough, whilſt they were barely Operations of the Mind, or Repreſentations from external Objects, he has placed them in a Subject that cannot err; to wit, in the Wiſdom of GOD himſelf; whom having ſuppoſed to be the Place of Spirits, as Space is of Bodies, and that there is an intimate Union betwixt GOD and the Soul of Man, by attending to him, who is always preſential to our Minds, we are to ſee all things in this *Ideal* or intelligible World *(z)*. Now, tho' there can be no Doubt, but GOD can lead us into all Truth, by diſplaying himſelf to us, and perhaps may deal thus with us when we are in Heaven; yet this way ſeems too ſupernatural whilſt on Earth, and too clear for frail and weak Men, who are not yet to know by Viſion; and it is withal ſo like the inward Light of a new Sect of Men, as not to make it over reputable: To which Purpoſe it is very

(x) Rech. L. 3. Par. 1. c. 6. 2.

very remarkable, that *Mallebranche*'s Opinion having been eſpouſed of late, by an ingenious Perſon of our own, with all the Advantages of Beauty of Style, and Perſpicuity of Expreſſion; yet the Men of new Light have taken ſuch hold of it, as to make it neceſſary for him to write an Apology to diſengage himſelf from the *Quakers*, who would needs have it thought they had gained a Proſelyte *(a)*: Wherein, though he has diſtinguiſhed himſelf from theſe People, yet thus much he owns, *That if the Quakers underſtood their own Notion, and knew how to explain it, and into what Principles to reſolve it, it would not very much differ from his.* In another Thing there is too great an Agreement, that theſe Men of Thought have too low a Value for Human Learning, either as it lies in our common Books, or in the Book of Nature, in reſpect of that Light which diſplays itſelf from the *Ideal* World, by attending to which with pure and defecate Minds, they ſuppoſe Knowledge to be moſt eaſily had. Experience and Deductions have been formerly

(a) *Cond. Hum. Lif. p.* 183.

eſteemed uſeful, but in this compendious Way to Knowledge, provided we make our Approaches, with our Souls purged, and with due Preparation of Mind, there needs little more than Application and Attention. Indeed Prayer has been made another Condition, which though it be proper and of good Uſe upon all Occaſions, yet it is not ſo pertinent here, where we ſpeak only of natural Means.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Of HISTORY.

I SCARCE ever met with any Hiſtorian who does not write true Hiſtory, if you will take an Account of him from his Preface, and not be too nice in examining his Book: The firſt Pages are uſually filled with the Care and Integrity of the Author, which, poſſibly, are to be found no where elſe. Thoſe who have taken moſt Care, have been charged with ſome Negligence; and all of them have been ſo far faulty, as to extort a Confeſſion from One of their Number, wherein he fairly owns, That there is none of the Hiſtorians that do

(b) *Vepiſc. juxta—— Init.—— Neminem Scriptorum quantum ad Hiſtoriam pertinet, non aliquid eſſe mentitum.*

do not lye in ſome Things *(b)*. He names ſome of the moſt unexceptionable, and pretends to be able to make good his Charge by unconteſtable Proofs. Let us take a ſhort View.

We have little conſiderable remaining of profane Ancient Story, except what we have left us by the *Greeks* and *Romans:* For as to the *Chaldean* Hiſtory of *Beroſus*, and the *Egyptian* of *Manetho*, they both writ ſince *Herodotus*, and we have only ſome Fragments of them left, preſerved by *Joſephus*, *Euſebius*, &c. And the Books that go under theſe great Names, are the impudent Forgeries of *Annius* of *Viterbo*. And as to *Sanconiathon*, who has given us the *Phœnician* Hiſtory, though he pretends to be much more *ancient*, yet his great *Antiquity* has been queſtioned by *Scaliger*, and his very Being by Mr. *Dodwell:* So that thoſe we are to depend on are the *Greeks* and *Romans*.

The *Greeks*, as they have not been noted for their Veracity in any reſpect,

ſo

ſo their Truth and Integrity in this Particular has been always ſo queſtionable, that *Græcia Mendax* has been ſtigmatiz'd in Hiſtory: We have no tolerable Account from them before the Olympiads; the Times before theſe were the mythick Ages, and are Fable; and when the hiſtorical Age commenceth, our Accounts of Things are not much better: For they having not originally had any publick Annals, or Regiſters of Things; and amongſt their ancient Authors, the *Poets* having had the firſt Rank, we may eaſily imagine what ſort of Accounts are to be expected from thoſe Men, who were either to follow uncertain Reports and Traditions, or what is much worſe, to copy the Poets. Accordingly, their firſt Accounts were very looſe, and rather Poems than Hiſtories, which they have been charged with by the *Romans* pretty freely; and *Quinctilian* is ſo far from ſoftning the Matter, that he compares the Liberty they took to a poetick Licence (*c*). But no Man has expoſed them ſo much as *Joſephus* (*d*) has done. He tells them, *Their Accounts of Things*

(*c*) *Inſtit. l.* 2. *c.* 4.
(*d*) *Contr. Appion. l.* 1.

are all novel; that they have no publick and authentick Annals, nor any Author more ancient than Homer, *and thoſe they have, do differ from one another: That* Hellanicus *differs from* Acuſilaus; *That* Acuſilaus *corrects* Heſiod, *and* Hellanicus Ephorus: *He again is corrected by* Timæus, *as* Timæus *is by others, and* Herodotus *by all:* And yet this is that *Herodotus*, who has been ſtil'd the Father of Hiſtory; though he might with equal Right be named the Parent of Fable. I know what Apologies have been made for him, eſpecially from late Voyages and Diſcoveries: But it is enough to ſay, he cannot be defended; and that thoſe few Inſtances, which have been brought, do rather ſhew the Wit of his Apologiſts, than ſignify much towards the redeeming the Credit of their Author: His Miſtakes are too numerous and too groſs to be accounted for, from ſome accidental Agreement with modern Diſcoveries.

It muſt be confeſs'd, ſome of the following Hiſtorians have writ more cautiouſly;

ouſly; and in this the Children have exceeded their Father, particularly *Thucydides*, who has been noted for his Accuracy and Care: But not to inſiſt upon *Joſephus*'s Authority, who has not exempted him from the common Cenſure, a great Part of his Hiſtory is taken up with large Speeches and Harangues, which had never any Exiſtence, except in the Imagination of his own Brain; and the reſt of his Story is of too narrow Extent, both as to Time and Place, to be of any conſiderable Importance in the Account of ancient Times, of the Darkneſs whereof he himſelf complains in the Entrance of his Book. He who has done moſt, and whoſe Accounts are moſt extenſive, is *Diodorus Siculus*, taking his Riſe from the Original of Things, and deſcribing the World in its full Latitude and Extent; and let any one excuſe him from Fable, and the Cauſe is yielded. His firſt five Books are almoſt a continual Fable, deſcribing more Ages than the World has had Duration, and ſuch Nations as have had no Being. *Lucian*'s true Hiſtory has ſcarce any thing more

incredible, than what may be met with in that Author. The beſt thing that can be urg'd in his Excuſe is, that he owns and confeſſeth the Charge that is brought againſt him; entitling his firſt Books, *Mythick Hiſtory*, which, in plain *Engliſh*, is fabulous: But this Argument has been largely proſecuted by a learned Pen (*e*).

(*e*) *Orig. Sacr. c. 4.*

WELL, but however fabulous the *Græcians* may have been, there may be more Certainty in *Roman* Story: It is poſſible there may, and yet not near ſo much as might be deſired. The moſt compleat and only general Hiſtory we have among them is *Livy*, whoſe Genius has been thought to equal the Majeſty of the People he deſcribes. To paſs by his *Patavinity*, which has been underſtood by ſome, of Partiality to his Country, and his long Orations that are pure Fiction, and monſtrous Prodigies, which are ſuch Vanities as only ſerve to amuſe the weaker Sort of People: His Accounts of remote Times are dim and blind; and, for want of ſufficient Vouchers, are juſtly queſtion-

queſtionable. He himſelf deſcribes the firſt Times, to the Foundation of *Rome*, as a poetical Period, rather than grounded upon undoubted Monuments (*f*); and after the building of the City, he complains, that the Uſe of Letters had been very rare, and conſequently little could be conſign'd to Writing; that therefore the Memory of Things was his beſt Guide, at leaſt ſo far as to the burning of *Rome*, when moſt of their publick Monuments did periſh with their City (*g*): Which could they have been preſerved, yet they were ſo *jejune* and naked, that they could hardly furniſh out Materials for a tolerable Hiſtory.

(*f*) *Lib.* 1. *p.* 1.

(*g*) *Lib.* 6. *p.* 1.

THE firſt Ground of the *Roman* Story, is the coming of *Æneas* into *Italy*; with this *Livy* begins his Book, and uſhers it in with tolerable Aſſurance; and if any thing could be known among them, it muſt have been their own Original; and yet this is ſo far from being allowed, that *Strabo* (*h*) plainly ſhews, *Æneas* never ſtirred out of *Troy*; and if *Homer's* Au-

(*h*) *Lib.* 13.

thority be of any Weight, it is plain, he did not only die there, but his Poſterity were to reign there in ſucceeding Ages (*i*). And that he never ſet Foot in *Italy*, has been made pretty evident, in a late Diſſertation to that Purpoſe (*k*). And yet notwithſtanding what can be ſaid againſt it, this was ſo received a Truth at *Rome*, that the ancient Families derived from *Venus* and *Æneas*; and upon this Reaſon the People of *Troy* had Privileges and Immunities granted them by the *Romans*, eſpecially by *Julius Cæſar*, who derived from them: But this was an Effect of Partiality to their Country, and of Vanity, in being thought deſcended from Gods and Heroes; wherein, with like Reaſon, they have been ſince imitated by other Nations.

(*i*) *Iliad.* 20 l. 306.

(*k*) *Bochart Epiſt. num Æneas unquam fuerit in Italia.*

THE Truth of it is, this Partiality to their Nation does ſhew itſelf in all their Hiſtorians: They repreſent themſelves not only as the moſt valiant People, but likewiſe as the moſt Juſt and Faithful in all their Wars and Alliances; and having had the Advantage of writing their own Story,

Story, they muſt have been believed in all they ſay, had there not been ſome Way left of diſcovering the contrary. Themſelves diſcover the Opinion their Enemies had of them. *Galgacus*, our brave Countryman, is introduced deſcribing them as Pyrates and publick Robbers, Men of inſatiable Avarice and unbounded Ambition, and upon theſe Motives, as Diſturbers of the Peace of Mankind: And though, no doubt, that noble Speech of his in *Tacitus* was made for him, yet the Hiſtorian had not obſerved a due *Decorum*, had he not made him ſpeak the Senſe their Enemies had of the *Roman* People. And though *Polybius* does ſometimes cenſure the *Roman* Juſtice, yet he no where diſcovers ſo much Truth, as by what he tells us of *Fabius* and *Philinus*. It ſeems theſe two had writ the *Punick* War, the one a *Roman*, the other a *Carthaginian*; the one blames the *Carthaginians* almoſt in every thing, and the other the *Romans*: It is poſſible they might both be blameable; but I know no Reaſon why we are not to give as much Credit to the *Carthaginian*, as we

are to the *Roman*. Had ſuch Hiſtorians as *Philinus* been yet preſerved, we might then have known all the *Roman* Faults, as we now read little beſides their Virtues; though we have the leſs Need of them to this Purpoſe, the Chriſtian Apologiſts (*l*) having left ſuch an Account of their Juſtice and publick Virtues, as is very inconſiſtent with their own Hiſtories. And indeed we have one ſure Way of detecting their Inſincerity, by comparing them with ſacred Story. What monſtrous Abſurdities have *Juſtin* and *Tacitus* related of the *Jews*, where they might have had Opportunities of being better informed? And we are not to think, that they have been more inquiſitive in knowing, or perhaps much more favourable in deſcribing other Nations: So that upon the Whole, the *Romans* in this Matter have not much outdone their Neighbours.

(*l*) *V. Min. Felix. v. Lanct. Inſt.*

I AM not ignorant what mighty Expectations were conceived of one Man (*m*), I mean *Cicero*, and how forward Men have been in imagining, that nothing could

(*m*) *Cic. de leg. l. 1. p. 1.*

could have been wanting in this Kind, had he undertaken the Work he once intended. For my Part, I ſcarce wiſh he had, and cannot but think he would have been as partial, and under as powerful Prejudices as any of the reſt: For how do you think he had cut out and contrived his Work? He had deſigned a Hiſtory from the Foundation of *Rome* to his Time; and in order to that, deſigned to begin at his own *Conſulate*, and write backward to *Romulus* (*n*): A very prepoſterous and unaccountable Method, did not the Reaſon appear: The good Man was full of himſelf, and was impatient to come at his own Praiſes; *Catiline*, no doubt, was in his Head, and after he had preſſed his Friends to write that War, and could not prevail with them to undertake it, he is reſolved to do it himſelf: And whether in the Conduct of the Work, *Cicero*'s Character would not have been too large, and *Catiline*'s too foul, I leave to every Man to judge: Would not *Catiline* have been painted out in the ſame Dreſs as he now ſtands in the four Orations? And had our Ora-

(*n*) *V. Dion. Caſſ. l.* 46. *ad Init. Tuſcul. ib.*

tor's Hiſtory come down as low as *Anthony*, ſhould we not have had too much of the *Philippicks*, to be reconcileable to Truth? *Cicero* requires ſo much of Oratory, as an Ingredient in an Hiſtorian (*o*), and ſo much Partiality in his own Hiſtorian, as to confirm the Suſpicion beyond a Doubt.

(*o*) *De Orat. L. 2. juxt. Init. Epiſt. 12. l. 5.*

If I ſhould deſcend to modern Times, I ſhould have a large Field before me; but the Path is ſo trodden, that every Man's own Reading will furniſh him with Obſervations: If there ſhould be any Man, who has made none of this Kind, he needs only peruſe the *Engliſh* and *French* Hiſtorians; and by comparing them together, he will find Matter of Diverſion and Admiration at the ſame Time. How differently do they deſcribe the ſame Action? How manifeſtly in favour of a Party? How often do the *French* glory in a Victory, which with the *Engliſh* is eſteemed an Overthrow? And again, How do the *Engliſh* ſometimes proclaim Victory, where their Enemies think they have given them a Defeat? How do they

they both triumph, where perhaps neither of them have Reaſon to glory? Or if the Advantage be too undeniable on our Side to be conteſted, as at *Agincourt* and *Creſſey*, how do our Enemies ſeek to leſſen it? How do they palliate every thing, and charge Heaven, or croſs Accidents, or mad Deſpair, with the Fortune of the Day? How do they turn every Stone, and labour to have the Succeſs and Honour fall any where, rather than on the *Engliſh*? Whereas on the other Side, how do the *Engliſh* arrogate all to themſelves, and their own Courage, and ſcarce allow any Share to Fortune or Deſpair, or lucky Accidents? You have *Fabius* and *Philinus*, only altering the Nation in the *French* and *Engliſh*. What a Reproach to Truth was it that a *Duke of Orleans*, one of the firſt Perſons in *France*, ſhould be ſaid to be openly executed for Treaſon at *Paris*, as was reported in twenty Hiſtories, whilſt the Duke was living, and could contradict the Report, who afterwards died in Peace, to the Shame and Ignominy of all his Hiſto-

(p) *V. Bodin. Meth. Hiſt. cap. 4.*

Hiſtorians (*p*)? Or who could imagine, that it ſhould be thought an univerſal Cuſtom amongſt the *Engliſh*, that upon an Invitation to a Friend's Houſe, the Perſon invited, ſhould in Compliment, lie with his Neighbour's Wife? And yet this, however barbarous it may ſeem, has been related by an European Hiſtorian (*q*), a Chriſtian, and one that lived almoſt to the laſt Century. Would not a Man have ſuſpected he had lived two Thouſand Years ago, or in ſome remote Corner of the World, where the *Engliſh* had been reckoned amongſt barbarous People?

(q) *Cholcocond. l. 2. p. 49.*

THESE are domeſtick Inſtances. If we look Abroad, upon the Diſcovery of the *Weſt-Indies*, what ſtrange Relations have we had from thence? We have been told there of a Nation of *Amazons*, of Giants of a prodigious Stature; the People of ſuch monſtrous Shape and truculent Aſpect, as if they were of another Species; and as many *Canibals*, as might eat up an ordinary Country

try (*r*). Whereas, upon further Inquiry, we meet with no *Amazons*, unleſs long Hair and want of Beards will metamorphize Men into Women, and the People are much of the ſame Size and Shape with the reſt of Mankind: But the *Spaniards* either ſaw them in a Fright, or were under the Vanity of reporting ſtrange Things; or being in love with the Gold of the Country, they were to repreſent the People as Monſters, that they might have a fairer Pretence to deſtroy them. And ſuch Inſtances may ſerve to illuſtrate ancient Hiſtory. Doubtleſs, *Herodotus* and *Diodorus* were impoſed upon by ſuch falſe Relations, and had not the like Opportunities with us of correcting their Miſtakes.

(*r*) *V. P. Mart. Ang. Ocean. p. 2, 4, &c. Purch. l. 2. p. 34, 58, 91, 97.*

I SHOULD be infinitely tedious, ſhould I give a Hiſtory of incredible Things, and therefore I only touch upon ſome few, and thoſe too Matters of Fact, which ought to be moſt certain: Whereas, ſhould we launch out into Myſteries of State, and the Cabinets of Princes, which are

are the moſt inſtructive Part, and moſt properly the Buſineſs of an Hiſtorian, we ſhould be ſtill more in the Dark. Matters of Fact are viſible Things, and fall under common Obſervation; whereas political Reaſons and Conſiderations are abſtruſe and hidden, and only penetrated into by ſome few of clearer Capacity and deeper Reach. Every ordinary Capacity can judge of Time by the Point or Hand, but the Spring and ſecret Motions are only obſerved by Men of Skill. Theſe Men in the State are the Miniſters, tho' the Secret be often hid, even from them; for the Reaſons which Princes give are often only pretended, and rather what they would have others think of them, than the true Motives by which they are guided. Such Things are out of my Road, and therefore I diſmiſs them.

I SHALL only obſerve further, that however vicious our Hiſtories may be already, there has been one Way taken to make them more corrupt, by *Secret Hiſtories* and *Turkiſh Spies*, and other Books

Books of the like Nature; which by an Appearance of Truth, and by mingling it with Falſehood, impoſe upon Men of eaſy Belief; and are now grown ſo numerous, that it is a Matter of Diſcernment to diſtinguiſh betwixt ſpurious and genuine Pieces. To which I may add *Varillus* and *Maimburgh*, and other *French* Authors, who write with ſo romantick an Air, as if they deſigned rather pleaſant Books, than true Hiſtory; and rather to entertain, than inform their Reader; who give us Paint inſtead of Dreſs, and make Heroes, if they cannot find them.

I HAVE done with this Head, and have kept cloſe to one Condition of Hiſtory, the Conſideration of its Truth; for ſhould I take in all the Conditions required by *Voſſius* and *Le Moyne*, we ſhould either have very little Hiſtory, or none at all. The Jeſuit *Le Moyne*, one of the laſt that has treated of this Subject, requires ſuch Conditions, and lays down ſuch Rules as no Man can follow; and is ſo nice

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(s) *Diſc.* 1. *ch.* 2. in his Examples, as to allow (*s*) only four Hiſtorians among the *Romans*, and not ſo many among the *Greeks*, and all of them ſhort of Perfection. And as to the Moderns, he is yet more ſcrupulous, in admitting them into Account, only it had been ſtrange, had he not found two or three of his own Order, *Meſſeus*, *Strada*, and *Mariana*, whom he thinks fit to equal with *Tacitus* and *Livy*. He deſigns us a Hiſtory himſelf, and to that End has chalk'd out ſuch a Method as he means to purſue: But if we may judge of his Veracity, by his perpetually running a Parallel betwixt Hiſtory and Poem; or of his Prejudices, by his Partiality to his Order, he is not like to outdo his Predeceſſors: And notwithſtanding his great Deſign, we may conclude this Chapter, as he does his Book, That *a compleat Hiſtory ſhall not appear, but in that Year that diſcovers the perpetual Motion, and the Philoſopher's Stone.*

In all this Chapter I have ſaid nothing of Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, from which, next

next to ſacred Story, we have the greateſt Aſſurance; and even from prophane Story (notwithſtanding all its Flaws) we have more Aſſurance, than in moſt other Sorts of Learning.

CHAP. XI.

Of CHRONOLOGY.

CHRONOLOGY and Geography have been looked upon as the two Eyes of Hiſtory: If theſe ſhine dim, our Hiſtory muſt be yet more obſcure; without theſe it lies in Confuſion, is only a Heap of indigeſted Matter, flat and inſipid, and will neither profit nor delight in Reading. It is Time and Place that give Life as well Beauty; and a naked Relation of Things, without Circumſtance, is very unaffecting Stuff: So that if theſe can be had, they will be an Acceſſion of Beauty; in want of theſe, there will be as great a Blemiſh. And in what

what Meaſure we have them, we muſt next inquire.

AND here again I ſhall paſs by the fabulous Accounts of Times; ſuch as the *Chineſe*, *Egyptian*, and *Chaldæan* may be juſtly thought to be: For tho' *Iſ. Voſſius* has attempted the *Chineſe* Antiquity, and the *Egyptian* Dynaſties have been endeavoured to be reconciled by our learned Countryman Sir *John Marſham*; yet there are ſo many Things to be ſuppoſed in their Accounts, and ſo little Poſſibility of Proof at ſo immenſe a Diſtance, that the Syſtems which they raiſe are perfectly precarious; and whatever the Aim of thoſe Authors was, I doubt neither of their Books have done Service to Religion. They ſeem to me like an Hypotheſis in Philoſophy; which being granted, our Philoſophers will argue plauſibly upon it, and make a ſhift to reconcile all Difficulties that ſhall be brought, though the Ground they go upon be Fiction and enchanted: So theſe Men will ſhift off Objections pretty plauſibly, and lay Things together in

ſpecious Order, tho' the Foundation they build upon be laid in the Air.

'Tis true, our Accounts of *Greece* are ſomewhat more clear and certain, but then they are ſuch as are too recent: If you trace them up to their remote Antiquities, the *Græcians* are as obſcure as the reſt of the World: The *Athenians*, the moſt knowing People of that Race, know nothing of their own Original: According to themſelves they were αὐτόχθονες, and either ſprung from the Earth, or had no Original at all. When their Hiſtorical Age takes place, yet their Periods of Time are dark and confuſed, and their Chronology is not ſo ancient as their Hiſtory. This has been obſerved by Sir *J. Marſham (a)*, who ſhews, that the ancient *Greeks* were wholly unſkilful in Chronology, eſpecially in the *Technical* Part of it. There was ſuch Diverſity and Inequality in their Years, and ſuch Variety in their Periods and Cycles, as did neceſſarily Occaſion great Confuſion; and it was impoſſible they ſhould make right Computations

(a) *Chron. Camp. p.* 14, 139.

putations of Times, where they had no ſure Rule to go by: This they had not; and accordingly their Year was ſo diſordered, and their recurrent Feaſts thereby ſo unſettled, that *Ariſtophenes (b)* pleaſantly tells us, That the Gods themſelves did not know them; and introduceth the Gods complaining of the Moon, that by her uncertain Notice of theſe Good Times, they were diſappointed of their Entertainments, and often forced to return back hungry to Heaven. *Meton* was the firſt who adjuſted theſe Differences, and reduced their Accounts to tolerable Regularity, by the Invention of that famous Period of nineteen Years, for which he has deſerved the Honour to be recorded in Letters of Gold: Though his Period was not ſo accurate, as not to be capable of Amendment, and therefore was afterwards corrected by *Calippus* and *Hipparchus*; ſo very unſteady have their Computations been. The *Arcadians* may have been thought to have been before them in this, if you will take that Account of their being before the Moon,

(b) *Ap. Seld. Mar. Arund. p.* 233.

aſſigned by ſome, by underſtanding it of their having had a Courſe of Lunar Years, before the *Greeks* had fixed their Periods; unleſs *Scaliger*'s Reaſon will be thought more probable (*c*).

(*d*) *Proleg. ad Emend. p.* 3.

NOR are the *Roman* Computations more regular: It has been looked upon as a Matter of Wonder, that the *Romans* ſhould differ ſo much in their firſt and great *Epocha*, the Time of building their City: *Onuphrius* (*d*) reckons upon ſeven different Opinions, moſt of them maintained by conſiderable Authorities, and is not a little amazed at the Diſagreement. I ſhould have wondered if it had been otherwiſe, conſidering either the Darkneſs of their ancient Hiſtory, or the Irregularity and Unequalneſs of their Computations. So little Regard had they to Order in Time, upon the Foundation of their City, that their firſt Years were neither regulated by the Courſe of Sun or Moon. *Romulus* inſtituted ſuch a Year as might be expected from a warlike Prince, and an illiterate People, conſiſting of ten Months, beginning

(*d*) *Comment. ad. Faſt. p.* 15.

ning at *March*, and ending at *December* (*e*): And although this Year was ſoon diſcovered to fall ſhort of the Natural Year and Courſe of the Sun; yet it is probable, he had not Skill, or perhaps Concern enough to correct the Miſtake; and the Intercalations that were made, were done in an unſkilful or negligent Manner: So that the *Year of Confuſion* muſt have happened ſooner than it did, had he not been ſucceeded by a Prince, who had more Inclination for the Arts of Peace than War. *Numa* undertook the Calendar where *Romulus* had left it; and though I do not think he had any Aſſiſtance from *Pythagoras*, as ſome have imagined (*f*), (which I doubt will appear to be a Chronological Miſtake) yet he reduced the Year to better Order, than could be reaſonably hoped for in ſo dim an Age, by adding the two Months, which had been wanting in *Romulus*'s Account, and ordering ſuch Intercalations to be made, as were neceſſary to ſet right the irregular Days. But whether it was that his Calendar was yet very imperfect, or that the

(*e*) *V. Blondel. Hiſt. du Cal. Rom. l.* 3. *c.* 1.

(*f*) *Blond. ib. cap.* 2.

High-Prieſts (with whom the Power of Intercalation was lodged) were wanting in their Duty, or whether ſomewhat of both concurred to the Miſcarriage; this is certain, that before *J. Cæſar*'s Time, the Courſe of the Year was ſo much diſordered, that the Months had run back into one another; their Winter was run into Autumn, and their Summer into Spring: And had not that wiſe Prince applied a Remedy, their Winter might have run into Summer. Theſe Inconveniencies being obſerved by *Cæſar*, put him upon a Reformation, which he attempted by his pontifical Power, and the Aſſiſtance of *Soſigines*, a ſkilful Aſtronomer; and having run all the irregular Days into One Year, conſiſting of Fifteen Months according to *Suetonius*, or of Four Hundred Forty-five Days, as *Cenſorinus* will have it; by One Year of *Confuſion* he brought their Calendar again to Order, by ſuch a Regulation as is too well known to need to be explained. However, his Computations (notwithſtanding the Skill of the Undertaker) were not accurate enough, for in

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leſs than One Thouſand Three Hundred Years (from the Council of *Nice*, to *Gregory* XIII.) the Calendar and the Heavens were found to be again at Diſcord, and to vary Ten Days in the Courſe of the Sun, and about Four Days in the Courſe of the Moon; which brought Things into ſuch Diſorder, as to occaſion another Year of *Confuſion*, under that Pope, in the Year 1582.

AND tho' this Pope's Reformation has been thought ſo compleat, as to be ſtiled *A Perpetual Calendar*, and Medals have been ſtruck upon the Occaſion, to perpetuate the Memory of the Thing, yet he muſt be a bold Man that will undertake it ſhall be perpetual; or will venture to maintain it to be ſo exact, as not to admit of Improvement. This is well known, that it had not been long abroad, till it was cenſured, and its Failings diſcovered by *Scaliger* and *Calviſius*, and wanted an Apology from *Clavius*, who had been one of the principal Perſons employ'd in the Deſign; with ſo little Succeſs notwithſtanding,

that if we will believe *Scaliger (g)*, it wants a ſecond Apology. And unleſs the Motions of the Sun were perfectly regular and uniform, even to Minutes and Scruples, (which, according to the beſt Calculations, they are not) it is ſcarce poſſible they ſhould fall under an invariable Rule. However this be, unleſs this Calendar were more generally received than it has yet been, it is like to occaſion further Confuſion: For whilſt it reaches little further than to thoſe Kingdoms under the Obedience of the Pope, and the *Julian* Account obtains in almoſt all the other *Chriſtian* Parts of *Europe*, we are cutting out Work for future Criticks, who are like to find Employment enough ſome Hundred Years hence, in reconciling the Differences which ſhall ariſe from the Old and New Style.

(g) *Scaliger an.* p. 51.

FROM this hiſtorical Account of *Times*, I think we have a fair Specimen of the Uncertainty of Chronology. Should we remove the Scene from Times to Men, they will further evince this Truth:

Truth: The two great Men in this ſort of Learning, were *Scaliger* and *Petavius*; the former of theſe has taken prodigious Pains upon the Subject, which appears in ſeveral of his Works, ſo more particularly in his great Work of the *Emendation of Times*, of which he had ſo good an Opinion, and was ſo much complimented by learned Men, upon his Divine and Immortal Work, that a Man would have imagined the Difficulties in the Accounts of Time had been pretty well cleared, and little left to be done further. His *Divine Work* had not been long abroad in the World, ere it was taken notice of by *Petavius*, who had ſpent as much Time in theſe Studies as *Scaliger* had; and is ſo far from allowing him thoſe mighty Praiſes, that he ſhews he had been almoſt under a continued Miſtake. A great Part of *Petavius*'s *Doctrine of Times*, is ſpent in confuting *Scaliger*; ſcarce a Chapter in his Five-Firſt large Books, wherein *Scaliger* is not mentioned, and his many Errors and Hallucinations diſcovered; in ſuch Manner, that his Work might

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as reaſonably be intitled, a Confutation of *Scaliger*, as a *Doctrine of Times*. He will ſcarce allow him to have done any thing well in Chronology; or to have made any conſiderable Diſcovery, unleſs it were in the *Julian Period*: And after he had granted him that Praiſe, as if he had done him too much Honour, he retracts that Commendation, and will not allow him to be the Inventor of that Period, but to have ſtole it from the *Greeks* (*b*). And if that Invention had been allowed him, (which our learned Primate perhaps with more Reaſon does attribute to a Countryman of our own, a Biſhop of *Hereford*) yet it being only a technical thing, and common Meaſure for fixing and reducing other Periods unto, and itſelf no real Period in Time; tho' it be good Uſe as an Inſtrument to work with, yet it is no real Diſcovery in the Accounts of Time, which

(*b*) *At profectò in tot ſcriptis ab eo Chronologicis libris, nihil fere eſt, quod momentum aliquod ad rem ullam habeat; quodque reprehenſionem effugiat, præter particulam iſtam, quâ Julianæ Periodi methodum explicavit* —— *Quanquam in eo caſtigandus eſt non nihil Scaliger: Quod ſi Periodi illius Inventorem, ac methodi fuiſſe glorietur, hanc enim à Græcis tranſtulit*—— *Doctr. Temp. l.* 9. *c.* 1.

which notwithſtanding this, remain in the ſame Obſcurity, only they may be ranged in better Order, under this common Period, than they were in before: So that either *Scaliger* had diſcovered nothing, at leaſt nothing conſiderable, or he has been very unjuſtly cenſured by his Adverſary *Petavius*. In many Things, no doubt, they have been both of them miſtaken; though both of them pretend to demonſtrate, and in many of their Calculations proceed with mathematical Aſſurance.

WHAT has been done ſince, has been chiefly in the Hiſtorical Part of Chronology, (the Controverſy ſome Years ago, having run much in the Technical, the Reformation of the *Roman* Calendar having probably turned Mens Diſputes that way) wherein Father *Pagi* has excelled, and from one accidental Obſervation (to ſay nothing of his other Diſcoveries) concerning the *Quinquennalia*, *Decennalia*, and other *Roman* Feaſts, has given much Light to the *Roman Faſti*,

Faſti, and diſcovered the Miſtakes of *Scaliger*, *Petavius*, *Beronius*, and moſt of the Hiſtorians and Chronologers, who have writ before his Time. How far his Obſervation will hold, Time muſt ſhew; he ſeems to glory too much, where he compares it to the Diſcovery of the *Weſt-Indies* by *Columbus (i)*.

(i) *Pagi, Diſſert. Hypat, p.* 6.

OUR late incomparable Biſhop of *Cheſter*, as he begun to write about the ſame Time with *Pagi*, ſo he has done it with like Succeſs; and from ſome dark Hints, and particularly from his Obſervations upon *Plotinus*'s Life to *Porphyry*, has given much Light to a very obſcure Part of Hiſtory, in his *Cyprianic* Annals: Tho' I cannot altogether have the ſame Opinion of his Poſthumous Chronological Works: For behold the Power of Prejudice, even in good Men! The Biſhop in this Work being to ſettle and adjuſt the Succeſſion of the *Roman* Biſhops; it happens that *Eutychius*'s Annals were of good Uſe to this Purpoſe, and very agreeable ro the Biſhop's Opinion.

nion. Who this *Eutychius* was, is well known, one whom the Biſhop in his Vindication of *Ignatius*'s Epiſtles *(k)*, had repreſented as too modern Authority to be much credited, living in the *Tenth Century*, and ignorant of the Affairs of his own Church, a trifling *Arabick* Hiſtorian, without Judgment, and contradicting himſelf: And yet this ſame *Eutychius*, when he favours the Biſhop's Opinion, tho' he knew little of his own Church, has good Authority in the Affairs of the *Church of Rome*, where he had Reaſon to be ignorant *(l)*, and the Biſhop is ſo poſſeſſed with him, that he forſakes our *Greek* and *Latin* Authors, to follow his Footſteps; although his Authority be really of no Value; and he has had that Right done him, to be contemned by moſt of thoſe who have taken notice of him; except Mr. *Selden*, who to gratify his Anger againſt the Biſhop, gave us a Part of this Author, and encouraged Dr. *Pocock* to publiſh the reſt.

(k) *Par.* 1. *cap.* 4.

(l) *Oper. Poſthum. Diſ.* 1. *c.* 14.

We have been promiſed great Things of late from Medals and Inſcriptions. *Ez. Spanheym*, famous for his Book *De Uſu Numiſmatum*, has largely ſhewn the Uſe of Medals *(m)* in Chronology, which *Du Freſne*, and *Foy-vaillant* have ſince illuſtrated by Example; the one in the *Conſtantinopolitan* Emperors, the other in the Hiſtory of the *Seleucidæ*, accommodated to Medals; and a third has gone ſo far, as from a few obſcure Medals of *Herod*'s Family, not only to call in queſtion the Authority, but by broad Intimations, to ſuſpect of Forgery, both *Joſephus*, and ſeveral others of our beſt Authors. But beſides the Danger from a dim Legend or Inſcription, where the leaſt Stroke will alter the Senſe, or determine the Number very differently; whoever conſiders, that *Annius* of *Viterbo* could forge large Hiſtories, will ſurely not think it ſtrange, that we ſhould have Forgeries in Medals. It is too certain, there have been ſuch, and the Thing is ſo noted, that ſome Medals are now as valuable,

(m) *De Uſu Num. p.* 859.

valuable, for being exact Counterfeits, as others are for being truly Originals. And as to Inſcriptions, who knows not, that it was generally the way of Flattery to compliment Princes and great Men of all Sorts, with fulſome Elogies; and that *Domitian*'s Medals and Inſcriptions were called in after his Death, becauſe he had not deſerved ſuch Honours? And though I do really think the preſent *French* King to be a wiſe and heroick Prince, yet I believe there are few who would be willing to take his Hiſtory from *Meneſtrier*'s *Lewis* IV. *from Inſcriptions and Medals.*

CHAP. XII.

Of GEOGRAPHY.

A STRANGER to Geography, that ſhould read the Voyages of *Ulyſſes* or *Æneas*, as they are deſcribed by the Poets, and ſhould obſerve the Time that is ſpent, the Removes that they make, and the Dangers they undergo, in being toſſed from Shore to Shore, would be apt to imagine, they had viſited moſt Parts of the habitable World; and yet it is plain, one of them ſcarce went any further than the *Ægean* Sea, and neither of them ever paſt the Mouth of the *Straits*: It is much ſo with our ancient Geography, where we have a great Noiſe, and

and little done. The Poets were wiſe, in ſtopping ſhort of the *Straits*; for had they launched out, and led their Heroes beyond theſe Bounds, they muſt have been in Danger of being loſt, all beyond having been *Terra Incognita*: Nor can this ſeem ſtrange in the Poets; the ancient Hiſtorians and Geographers knew little further, *Herodotus (a)* is loſt when he paſſeth the *Straits*; *Poſidonius*, and *Artimedorus*, and *Strabo*, make the Sun to ſet there; and *Ariſtotle*'s Philoſophy will carry him little further, who will needs have *India* to confine upon the *Straits* and *Hercules*'s Pillars: And indeed it is ſo far true, that the *Straits* and *India* did border upon one another, as *India* ſeems to have been a common Name among the Ancients for Ignorance, for where they knew no further, they called it *India*; of which *Strabo* tells us *(b)*, all the Geographers that have writ have given us nothing but Lies. I will not enter upon a Narrative of the Miſtakes of the Ancients, and ſhew how they have confounded Places near Home, and

(a) *Herod. l. 2. Strab. l. 3. ad init.*

(b.) *Lib. 2.*

jumbled Sea and Land together; how ſome of them have miſtaken the *Mediterranean*, and joined it with the *Perſian* Sea: How the Northern Seas have been made to run into the *Caſpian*, that is really a Lake; and the *Arabian* has been made a Lake, that is well known to flow into the Ocean: He that has a Curioſity may meet with a plentiful Harveſt of ſuch Miſtakes in *Strabo*'s Three Firſt Books.

STRABO indeed has corrected many of theſe Miſtakes, and has delivered Things down to us with greater Accuracy: But neither is he exact enough; he is too much an Hiſtorian to be a good Geographer, and wanting Tables and Maps, and the Longitudes and Latitudes being Things beyond his Skill, without which it is ſcarce poſſible to fix Places aright, he muſt needs err for want of ſuch Helps to guide his Courſe: And the ſame may be ſaid of moſt of the reſt of the Geographers, before or ſoon after his Time.

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THE Honour of reducing Geography to Art and Syſtem, was reſerved to *Ptolemy*: who by adding Mathematical Advantages to the Hiſtorical Method, in which it had been treated of before, has deſcribed the World in a much more intelligible Manner: He has delineated it under more certain Rules; and by fixing the Bounds of Places from Longitude and Latitude, has both diſcovered others Miſtakes, and has left us a Method of diſcovering his own. What theſe are I need not ſay; the moſt conſiderable may be ſeen in *Agathidæmon*'s Map of the World, which is printed with *Ptolemy*'s Works, and is the firſt of its Kind now extant. A Man may ſee there with ſome Pleaſure, what Idea the Ancients had of the World, after it was thought to have been pretty plainly diſcovered by *Ptolemy*'s Labours: No very clear one you may be ſure: Among other Miſtakes, the Situation of *Britain* is quite miſtaken; *Scandinavia*, a large Peninſula, is divided from the Continent, and contracted into a poor narrow

Iſland: *Africa* is deſcribed without Bounds, and no Paſſage allowed from the *Mediterranean* to the *Red Sea*; and it will not be wondered, if the Deſcription of *India* be remote from Truth. Leſſer Errors abound in him: How many of this kind have been detected by a late ſkilful Geographer *(i)* only in one of our *European* Nations? And how many more might be ſhewn in the reſt? And if he could be ſo much deceived, as he is in the Deſcription of *Cyprus*, an Iſland near *Alexandria*, and almoſt at his own Door, it will not ſeem ſtrange, that he ſhould be more out in his Accounts of *Scandinavia* in *Britain*. It is certainly no Commendation, that the fore-cited Author prefers *Pliny*'s Accounts to *Ptolemy*'s, who has not been very reputable for his Accuracy or Truth, and that *Strabo* (in the Hiſtorical Part) is preferred to them both.

(i) *Cluvet. German. Antiq. Præf.*

We have had a Geography of late, deducing all Things from the *Phœnician* Antiquities, which has appeared with Pomp enough to dazzle Men into an Opinion

pinion thereof, and thereby to obtain Credit and Reputation in the World. The Author is a conſiderable Perſon, and one, who in order to eſtabliſh his *Phœnician* Antiquities, the firſt Thing he complains of, is want of Monuments *(k)*, and therefore flies to the *Greeks* to fetch them thence; ſo that we are much in the ſame Place where we were. However, what are theſe Monuments which we meet with there? By his own Confeſſion only ſome looſe and broken Fragments, which ſeem to diſcover little more, than in general, that the *Phœnicians* made long Voyages, and viſited remote Countries; and what is that to us, if they have left us no Charts or Journals, which they have not done? So that at laſt he uſually takes ſhelter in the Derivation of a Word or Place from a *Phœnician* Root; wherein, though he has been happy enough in his Conjectures, yet this Way is principally conjectural, and too precarious to build a Geography upon. If this be all, I will undertake *Goropius Becanus* will go near to do as much for the *Dutch*; *Pere Pez-*

(k) *Præf. ad Chan.*

ron for the *Celtique*; and almoſt every Country that pretends to an Original Language, and has a fanciful Man amongſt them, will do the like for their own Nation. I am unwilling to oppoſe this Author for the Sake of his Title which is *Geographia Sacra*, and ſhall readily grant, nay, it is what I contend for, that as far as it is Sacred, it is likewiſe true; but where he leaves *Moſes*, he forſakes his Guide, and wanders as much as the *Phœnicians* ever did.

I HAVE no Deſign to form a Compariſon betwixt the Ancients and Moderns, they are both alike to me; but the Advantage in this, is too viſible on the Side of the Moderns to be diſſembled: They have opened a Paſſage to a New World, unknown to the Ancients, and thoſe Parts of the Old, which have been thought uninhabitable, have been found to be inhabited; and their Torrid Zone to be temperate enough, by refreſhing Showers, and conſtant Breezes and cold Nights, by the direct Setting of the Sun, and Interpoſition of the whole

whole Body of the Earth. *Antipodes*, who have been the Subject of ſo much Controverſy, are to us Matter of Fact; and the Globe itſelf has been compaſſed with leſs Noiſe by *Magellan* and *Drake*, than the *Phœnicians* and *Greeks* could coaſt upon the *Mediterranean*: However, leſt we ſhould ſwell too much upon our Diſcoveries, there is yet World enough left undetected to be a Check upon our Ambition.

I AM not of his Opinion *(l)*, who thinks that almoſt one half of the terreſtrial Globe is yet undiſcovered, but by modeſt Computation, I ſuppoſe we may allot a fourth Part. That there is a vaſt Southern Continent, as yet ſcarce look'd into, is now paſt Controverſy; though I much doubt, whether the further Diſcovery would turn to great Account; for the *Dutch*, who pretend to have ſailed to the ſixty-fourth Degree of Southern Latitude, have obſerved Mountains covered with Snow; and no farther South than the utmoſt Bounds of *America*, the Straits of *Magellan* are ſo froze in

(l) *La Mothe la Vayer, Vol. I. p.* 825.

in *April (m)*, that there is then no paſſing that way for Ice: So that much of the Country muſt be cold and barren, anſwerable to our Northern Climes on this Side. The *Northern* Parts of *America* are yet undiſcovered, nor can it be determined, till its Bounds that way be laid open, whether it be a vaſt Iſland or a Continent. *Africa*, though it has been compaſſed round and round from the *Mediterranean* to the *Red Sea*, yet little more than its Coaſts are thoroughly known, except *Egypt* and *Abaſſia*: Its inland Parts have been either not ſufficiently viewed, or imperfectly deſcribed, neither the Merchants Gain, nor the Miſſionaries Zeal having determined their Purſuits to ſuch rude and deſolate Countries. And as to *Aſia*, what a prodigious Compaſs are we forced to fetch about, to come at the extreme Regions of that Quarter of the World, moſt of which might be ſaved, and a Voyage made with half the Charge and Time, could a Paſſage be diſcovered by the *North*, to *Tartary* and *China*? A Paſſage which has been often attempted, but

(m) Naborough's *Voyage*, *p.* 15.

but always with Diſappointment, and ſometimes with the Loſs of the Adventurers; and is like to continue a *ne plus ultra*, to their moſt daring Endeavours: Whether we conſider the Dangers they are expos'd to from rough Winds, in a Clime intenſely Cold; or from Mountains of Ice, which are the Rocks that are moſt feared in thoſe Seas; or the Difficulties in making their Way in thick Miſts and Fogs; or what may happen worſe, in Nights of ſome Months continuance, and no Moon either to direct their Courſe, or give them Light. To ſay nothing of a vaſt Ridge of Mountains, which has been obſerved by our late Miſſionaries (*n*) to ſtretch itſelf forth into the *Tartarian* Sea, the Cape whereof has never yet been doubled, and probably never may: It being doubtful, whether theſe Mountains may not reach to the oppoſite Coaſt, and join *America* with the *Aſian* Continent: So that the Bounds of *Aſia* on that Side, as well as the oppoſite *Armenian* Coaſt, have been hitherto hid from our Inquiries.

(*n*) *Le Compt. Memoir. Let ult.*

THERE

THERE is one Thing yet very lame in our Geography, the fixing the true Longitude of Places; and though ſeveral new Ways have been lately tried to redreſs this Inconvenience, both from exact *Pendulums*, and from Obſervations upon the Immerſions and Emerſions of *Jupiter*'s *Satellites*, yet they have not altogether proved effectual. For want of this, *China* has been placed in our Maps five or ſix hundred *French* Leagues further diſtant than it really is (*o*), and an imaginary Country found out, to fill up the vaſt intermediate Space; and *Voſſius*, who delights in Paradoxes, who has magnified Old *Rome* to above Seventy Miles in Compaſs, and its Inhabitants to Fourteen Millions of People (*p*), has removed it yet farther off. And though the Jeſuits of the Miſſion have pretended to rectify this Miſtake, from the mathematical Obſervations above-named, yet neither could *Voſſius* ſee into the Strength of ſuch Arguments, and I much queſtion whether they would have obtained Credit, had not a Miſſionary of the ſame

(*o*) *Le Compt. ib.*

(*p*) *Var. Obſervat. p.* 23, 24. *ib. p.* 168.

Order (*q*) determined the Matter in a more undeniable Way, by opening a Paſſage from *Muſcovy* to *China*, and by marking the ſeveral Stages, and ſhewing, from undoubted Relations, it was only a Journey of ſo many Days. And yet the Difficulty is greater at Sea, which is not capable of being ſo eaſily meaſured, and where the Obſervations in our Teleſcopes cannot be ſo regularly made, as they may upon firm Ground; and there it is the *Jeſuits themſelves* complain, they are at a loſs.

(*q*) *Avril. L.* 2.

VOSSIUS has aſſigned ſuch a Reaſon (*r*) of the Variety in fixing the Longitude of the Eaſtern Part of the World, as may be extended further, and be of excellent Uſe in Speculations of this Nature. Upon the Diſcovery of the *Weſt-Indies* by the *Spaniards*, and a Paſſage opened by Sea near the ſame Time to the *Eaſt* by the *Portugueſe*, *Alexander* VI. by the Power which Popes have of diſpoſing of Temporal Kingdoms, did by ſolemn Bulls (*ſ*) diſpoſe of this new World to theſe two Nations; and having

(*r*) *Var. Obſerv. p.* 169.

(*ſ*) *Marion. L.* 27, *cap.* 3.

ing divided it into two Hemiſpheres, the Weſtern Hemiſphere he allotted to the *Spaniards*, and the Eaſtern to the *Portugueſe*; a Diviſion which the *Dutch* and *Engliſh* have not thought themſelves obliged to ſubmit to. However, the Diviſion was made; but when the Parties came to claim their reſpective Shares, a Queſtion preſently aroſe about fixing the Longitude, and the *Pope*'s having not been *then* infallible in Matters of Fact, eſpecially in ſuch as depend upon Mathematical Calculations, the two Nations were left to end the Controverſy betwixt themſelves. The great Contention was about the *Molucca Iſlands*, which the *Spaniards* claimed as theirs, and the *Portugueſe* pretended fell within their Share in the Diviſion; and Men of Skill being conſulted on both Sides, the *Spaniſh* Geographers went one Way, and the *Portugueſe* went another; and ſo far were the two Nations from coming to Agreement, that they differed almoſt forty Degrees in their Calculations, which is a large Proportion of the whole Globe; and yet ſo obſtinate were both

in

in their Accounts, that Orders were given by publick Edicts, that the Degrees and Meridians ſhould be no otherwiſe fixed in their ſeveral Charts and Maps, than as they have been determin'd by the two Nations. How much the one Side was miſtaken, has been ſince better known; the Concluſion was, that whilſt the Longitude was determined, in ſuch an unaccountable Manner, by publick Edicts and abſolute Power, it occaſioned ſtrange Confuſion in our Degrees and Meridians, of which *Voſſius* thinks we have not recovered ſince.

BUT granting the Globe to have been nicely meaſured, has it withal been as accurately deſcribed? I doubt not. How are our modern Geographers perplexed in making out the Situation of ancient Places? *Babylon*, once the moſt glorious City upon Earth, is almoſt as much hid (*t*), as the obſcureſt Village ever was; nay, they often ſtumble, where they tread in known Paths. *Ferrarius* has given us a Geographical Dictionary, pretending to be Univerſal, afterward ſo much

(*t*) *Luyts*, *p.* 492.

much enlarged and corrected by *Baudrand*, as to ſeem a new Work: They were both of them Men noted for their Skill in Geography; notwithſtanding which, their joint Work had not appeared above twelve Months in the World, till Monſieur *Sannſon* had diſcovered five hundred Faults (*u*) only under the firſt letter *A*. A Work of the like Nature has been ſince publiſhed in *Engliſh* by two other extraordinary Perſons; and though no *Sanſon* has yet made his Obſervations upon it, yet I will undertake, with the little Skill I have in Geography, to ſhew greater Miſtakes under the Letter *A*, than any that occur in *Ferrarius*, or *Baudrand*. To name only one, the *Azores* are there deſcribed as the ſame with the *Canary Iſlands*; which is an Error of worſe Conſequence, and more inexcuſable, becauſe the firſt Meridian is uſually placed in theſe Iſlands: And yet they ſtand thus in the corrected and enlarged Edition.

(*u*) *Nouv. de la Rep. Ann.* 84. *p.* 310.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

Of CIVIL LAW.

WE have certainly one great Proof of the Excellency of the *Roman* Laws, from the Conſent of thoſe many Nations, by whom they have been received; and that too, where there is no living Authority to enforce them, and they come recommended only by their own native Force. The *Roman* Laws have lived longer, and ſpread wider than their Arms ever did; and the Conqueſts of their Wiſdom have been greater than thoſe of their Power. However, there is only one perfect Law, a Character to which no human Ordinance

can have any Claim, and of which the *Roman* Laws will be found upon Examination to fall much ſhort; notwithſtanding the Reputation of Wiſdom that they ſtand poſſeſſed of.

THE Twelve Tables contain the firſt Grounds of the *Roman* Laws, and having been Abridgments of thoſe of *Solon* at *Athens*, and thoſe of the other Cities in *Greece*, renowned for Knowledge, added to the ancient Cuſtom of *Rome*; if there be any Wiſdom in human Conſtitutions, it might be expected to be met with there. It was of theſe Tables, that *Cicero* pronounced under the Perſon of *Craſſus* (*x*), that they were of more Uſe and Authority, than all the Books of the Philoſophers: We have only ſome Fragments of them left, collected by *Baldwin* and others; amongſt which, as there are ſome Things hard, ſo that Law which permits the Body of the Debtor to be cut in pieces, and divided amongſt his Creditors for want of Payment, is not only cruel, but barbarous. *Baldwin*, (*y*) himſelf cannot

(*x*) *De Orat. L.* 1.

(*y*) *Com. de Leg.* 12. *Tab. c.* 46.

not quote it without Exclamation; and *Quinctilian*, who could give a Colour to moſt things, and as a *Roman* was concerned to do it in this, yet where this Law comes in his Way, rather ſeeks to excuſe it *(z)*, than offer at its Defence: The beſt thing he ſays for it is, That it was then antiquated, and as ſuch we leave it with the reſt of that Sett, and paſs on to thoſe that are now in Force, the Imperial or *Juſtinianean* Laws, and will ſee what Exceptions can be made to thoſe.

(z) *Ap. Bald. ib.*

THEY are principally reducible to two Heads, the *Pandects* and the *Code*: Whereof the firſt contains the Opinions of learned Lawyers; the other the Decrees of *Roman* Emperors. As to the *Inſtitutes*, they uſually go along with the *Pandects*, and are only a Compendium, or uſeful Introduction to young Beginners: And the Novels are a Supplement to the *Code*. The *Feuds* are not of *Roman* Original, but Cuſtoms of a later Date, and meaner Extraction.

THE *Civilians*, who pretend that if the *Latin* Tongue were loſt, it might be found in the Book of *Pandects*, would take it ill to be thought miſtaken in the Word *Pandect*; which although a Maſculine (*a*), is generally uſed by them in a Feminine Signification: This is a light Error, only it is in the Threſhold. It will not be denied, the greateſt Part of the *Pandects* were writ with Purity enough; they have that from the Authors and the Age they were writ in; and ſo much is owned by thoſe Critics, who have been pretty ſevere upon the other Tomes of the Law, and therefore I ſhall make no Objection here; no more than I ſhall, that the Emperor, by whoſe Order they were collected, is under no very advantageous Character for Learning; that which *Suidas* gives him being Ἀναλφάβητος, a Man that did not underſtand his Alphabet: For tho' he were unlearned himſelf, he might employ Men of Underſtanding; and if *Tribonian* were ſuch, who was the great Inſtrument in that Work,

(a) *H. Steph. de uſ. Ling. Gr. p.* 12.

Work, his Laws will have no leſs Authority upon that Account: But ſo it happens, that *Tribonian*'s Character is worſe than the Emperor's, not for his Underſtanding, but Integrity; being repreſented by the ſame Author *(b)* as a corrupt Perſon, one that writ Laws, and took them away, and proſtituted Juſtice for the ſake of Lucre; one that complied with his Prince's Paſſions and Humours, and flattered him almoſt to Adoration. I know *Suidas*'s Authority is ſuſpected in both theſe Inſtances, and therefore I ſhould lay the leſs Weight upon it, did not *Juſtinian* ſeem to countenance the Charge in his own Conſtitutions *(c)*, where he aſſumes ſuch Titles and Honours, as *Tribonian* is ſaid to have given him: However, I charge nothing upon this Emperor, I only cite his Words, and leave others to judge of and reconcile them.

(b) *Suid. ad Tribon.*

(c) *V. Conſtitut. de Cod. Conf. & de Conf. Digeſt. ubi* Divina noſtra, Numen noſtrum, *&c.*

BUT whatever *Tribonian*'s other Qualifications were, I doubt we have too much Reaſon to blame his want of Care; and to ſuſpect the Conception of the *Pan-*

decis, as well as the other Tomes of the Law, was a haſty Work, and not digeſted with that Accuracy, which a Work of that vaſt Importance might juſtly require. For whereas in his Time the Books of the Law had been growing up above 1000 Years; and had been ſwoln to that Bulk, that they were contained in 2000 Volumes, ſo many as could not eaſily be read in ſome Years, much leſs compared and digeſted, and reconciled: *Tribonian*, with his few Aſſiſtants, had overcome all theſe Difficulties in a ſhort Time, and in three Years had finiſhed the *Digeſt* and *Inſtitutes*, then added to the firſt Draught of the *Code*; which laſt, in all Probability, having been compoſed too haſtily, was forced to undergo an Emendation, and to come forth in a ſecond Edition. And doubtleſs the *Digeſt* might likewiſe have been more correct, had it coſt more Years, and had *Tribonian*'s ſecond Care. The Emperor himſelf ſeemed ſurpriſed with the Diſpatch; for as before it was undertaken, he ſtiles it an infinite Work, ſuch as none of the former Emperors had

ventured

ventured to undertake, or thought poſſible; ſo after it was finiſhed, within the Compaſs of three Years, he plainly owns *(d)* he did not imagine it could have been effected in leſs than Ten. Accordingly the Marks of Haſte have been obſerved in the Work: In ſome Places too ſhort, and conſequently obſcure; in others redundant, and the ſame Things repeated, only in different Words, or from different Authors: *Antinomies* are almoſt unavoidable in ſuch Variety of Opinions and Anſwers, and ſometime inextricable Difficulties occur, by mangling the Senſe, and curtailing Authors: Some things in that or the *Code* ſeem not ſo conſiſtent with the Canons *(e)*; and other Caſes yet harder have been cited *(f)* by a learned Advocate. A great Part of it is ſpent in Caſes and ſubtle Opinions, poſſibly of greater Learning than real Advantage in the common Uſes and Occaſions of Life; and all theſe are left as much indigeſted, in looſe and broken Sentences; not in ſuch Method as is ſuitable to a regular Body of Laws: Moſt of which Particulars

(d) *Conſtitut. ib.*

(e) *Windec, Can. & Leg. con ſons & diſ.*

(f) *Paſq. Rech. L. 9. c. 41.*

have been taken notice of by *Budæus*, *Hottoman*, *Valla*, and others.

NOR is the *Code* leſs liable to Cenſure, for beſides that it wants much of the Purity and Learning which appear in the *Pandects*, *Tribonian*'s Unſkilfulneſs or Inſincerity do more viſibly diſplay themſelves here: For, whereas almoſt all the Books of the ancient Lawyers are now loſt, (the Blame whereof, if ſome Mens Suſpicions may be credited, will fall heavy on the Emperor, or *Tribonian*) from whoſe Labours the *Pandects* were collected; and therefore we are leſs able to judge of any unfair Dealing that has been ſhewn there. Many of the Emperor's Conſtitutions do yet remain, and have been preſerved in the *Theodoſian Code*: From all which it is eaſy to determine, what ſort of Treatment the Imperial Conſtitutions have met with in *Tribonian*'s New Compilation. Some of the Conſtitutions have been altered without Judgment, and others in ſuch a manner, as betray no little Ignorance in the Compiler

piler: In ſome the Words are ſtruck out, that determine the Senſe of the Law; and again Words added, that give it a new one: One Law is ſplit into Two, and ſometimes Two are run into One: The Time and Date are often miſtaken, and ſometimes the Perſon; the knowing both which does afford great Light to a Conſtitution; with other Miſtakes, which I ſhould not have ventured to have put down, had they not been ſhewn at large in a learned Preface, and more learned Prolegomena to the *Theodoſian Code*: A *Code* of ſuch Uſe to this Day, that there is no underſtanding *Juſtinian*'s Law without it, and formerly of ſuch Authority, that for ſeveral hundred Years after *Juſtinian*'s Time, it did obtain (*g*) in ſome of the Weſtern Parts of *Europe*, when *Juſtinian*'s Law was in a manner extinguiſhed and forgot, and muſt have been in danger of periſhing, at leaſt in the principal Part of it, the *Pandects*, had it not been preſerved in the *Piſan* or *Florentine* Copy, from which all our other Copies (*h*) have been taken, and is now uſed

(*g*) *V. Seld. Diſ. ad. Flet. c.* 5. *v. Paſq. Rech. L.* 9. *ch.* 36.

(*h*) *Ant. Auguſt. Emend. L.* 1. *c.* 1.

uſed as Law: So that by a ſtrange Reverſe of Things, *Juſtinian*'s Law, which for ſo many Ages was loſt or neglected, does now obtain, and the *Theodoſian Code* is in a manner antiquated: The *Theodoſian Code* was the better Law, till the Reign of *Lotharius*, when *Juſtinian*'s Law begun to revive; and now it ſeems *Juſtinian*'s Law is better than that, and Time, or Chance, or Opinion ſhall determine their Worth. It is plain, *Juſtinian*'s Law had not the ſame Eſteem at its Birth, as it has ſince acquired by Age, ſince it could go into Diſuſe ſo early after its Conception, as to make it a Queſtion, Whether it obtained its Courſe (*i*) in *Juſtinian*'s own Reign? Or if it obtained then, as doubtleſs it did, it kept its Ground a ſhort Time, till the Reigns of *Baſilius* and *Leo*, when *Juſtinian*'s Law was abridged and reformed by thoſe Emperors, as he had done by the Laws before his own Time: And theſe Emperors Laws obtained in the *Eaſt* (under the Title of the *Baſilick Conſtitutions*) till the Diſſolution of that Empire, as the *Theodoſian Code*

(*i*) *Paſq. Recb. L.* 9. *c.* 33.

Code had done in the *Weſt*: So that if we might meaſure Things by Succeſs or Duration, *Juſtinian*'s Laws have not yet been long-liv'd; and what is more ſurpriſing, it might perhaps be made a Queſtion, In what Senſe they lived now? For if we will believe a noted Author, who had Reaſon to underſtand their Authority and Extent *(k)*, they have not now the Force of Laws, either in *France*, *Spain*, or *Holland*, (ſome of the moſt conſiderable Nations in *Europe)* but have only the Force of good Reaſons or Authority, when alledged; but the Cuſtoms and Statutes of thoſe Places, are only Laws: And of this Opinion Mr. *Selden* *(l)* ſeems to be, as to ſome other *European* Nations.

(k) *Sir* W. Temple. *V. I. p.* 171.

(l) *Seld. Diſ. ad. Flet. c.* 6.

AFTER the Conſideration of the *Pandects* and *Code*, if I ſhould take in all thoſe large Volumes that have been writ upon them, I ſhould make no End. The firſt Attempts of this Kind were pretty modeſt, only by explaining the Text in ſhort Gloſſes, which was *Accurſius*'s Method:

thod: But he having not had the Aſſiſtances of human Learning, and particularly of the *Greek* Tongue, the Want of theſe have betray'd him to groſs and childiſh Miſtakes: And it is a wretched Gloſs, where a Sentence of *Greek* occurs in the Text, *Hæc Graica ſunt, quæ nec legi nec intelligi poſſunt:* And yet his Authority is great in the Law, much greater than that of his Son; of whom it is ſaid he never made a good Gloſs (*l*).

(*l*) *V. Gryphiand. de Inſp. p.* 9, 10.

COMMENTARIES ſucceeded Gloſſes, and have ſwoln to a larger Bulk: In this Kind *Bartolus* is of great Name; whoſe Authority is as much valued in ſome Nations amongſt the modern Lawyers, as *Papinian*'s was among the Ancients; who, as he was to be followed, where the Opinions of the Lawyers were equally divided (*m*), ſo *Bartolus*'s Opinions of late have been of like Force: He was confeſſedly an extraordinary Man; and might have done more Service in his Profeſſion, had he not lived under the ſame Infelicity of Times, and wanted the ſame

(*m*) *Duck. de uſu. L.* 1. *c.* 8.

ſame Helps that *Accurſius* did, whereby he daſhed againſt the ſame Rocks. It was from him we have had that noted and almoſt proverbial Saying, that has caſt ſome Reproach upon the Law, (*n*) *De verbebus non curat Juriſconſultus*, an odd Expreſſion for an Interpreter of that Law; one Title whereof is, *Of the Signification of Words*: But this was a Title that he did not care to meddle with, and which his Enemies have charged him with not daring to explain. Notwithſtanding all his Faults, he ought not to have been treated ſo reproachfully by *L. Valla*, and the Men of polite Letters: Fow however unpoliſhed he may be in his Style, or nice or obſcure in Expreſſions, or however ignorant in Hiſtory or *Roman* Cuſtoms, it is certain, he is not that Gooſe and Aſs that *Valla* (*o*) would make him; and that he has more Law, tho' the others may have more Learning.

(o) *V. Vit. Bart. ap. Freher.*

(o) *Op. p.* 632.

THE polite Men of this Sett, who gave the laſt Turn to the Law, were *Alciat*, *Cujacius*, *Budæus*, and others: They have

have indeed reſtored the Law to its primitive Purity and Luſtre, and cloathed it in a more elegant Dreſs, and made that a pleaſant Study, which, in the Hands of *Bartolus* and *Baldus*, was uncouth and rugged: They have given it all the Advantages of human Learning, and ranſacked all the Stores of Arts and Sciences to fetch thence Beauties to adorn it: But whilſt they have buſied themſelves in various Learning, and attended to too many Things at once, they have been thought wanting in the one main Thing; and have had leſs Law, than many of thoſe whom they cenſure and deſpiſe. *Ant. Auguſtinus*, who ſhould have been named with the firſt of this Rank and Order, does in a manner confeſs the Charge, and owns, that *Budæus*, whilſt he had been too much diſtracted in attaining the Tongues, had made no great Progreſs in the Knowledge of the Law. The moſt conſiderable Improvements that have been made by theſe Men, have been principally upon one Title, about *the Signification of Words*; in which, however they may

may have excelled, they have been rewarded by *Bartolus*'s Followers, with no better Character than that of Grammarians and Criticks. And indeed many of their Diſcoveries are not very remarkable, and ſome of them trifling; a Catalogue of which may be had in *Albericus Gentilis*'s two laſt Dialogues, which, becauſe it is too ſportful, I forbear to mention. That wherein they unconteſtedly excel, being the Signification of Words, will be allow'd to fall ſhort of the Knowledge of Things.

ONE Thing ſhould not have been omitted, that has occaſioned no little Obſcurity and Confuſion. When the Law, by the Bulk and Number of Books that were writ, was grown too voluminous, a Way was taken up of contracting it into a narrow Compaſs, by ſhort Notes and Abbreviations: This Way was found to be of ſuch Uſe, and ſo compendious, that it prevailed much; but its Inconvenience was quickly diſcovered from the Ambiguity that ſuch ſhort Notes were ſubject to, and

and therefore they were forbid by a Conſtitution (*p*) of *Juſtinian*. However, the Miſchief was not ſo eaſily remedied as forbid, for it ſtill prevailed, and that almoſt in *Juſtinian*'s own Time; and ſome of them have crept into the *Florentine Pandects*, which though ſo ancient as *Juſtinian*, (as ſome have been of Opinion; but whom this very thing (*q*) does ſufficiently confute) yet muſt be granted to have been writ ſoon after: And at laſt they grew to that Height, and occaſioned ſuch Confuſion and Ambiguity, that ſeveral Treatiſes have been writ to explain them; a Collection of which, and a Specimen of the Notes may be had in *Putſchius*. Even of late they have been found ſo troubleſome, that the *Italian* entered them in his Prayer, amongſt the three Evils he petitioned to be delivered from, (he might have deprecated great Evils) and after, *Du furia de Villani*, and *Da guazabuglio di Medici*; *Da gli & cætera de notai*, was the Third Petition (*r*).

(*p*) *Cod. L.* 1. *Tit.* 17.

(*q*) *V. Ant. Aug. Emend. L.* 1. *c.* 1.

(*r*) *V. Herm. Hug. de Orig. Ser.* 21.

AND

AND here again, as in the Entrance upon this Chapter, I muſt profeſs my Eſteem for the *Roman* Laws, which I would by no means be thought to undervalue; and all that I infer or pretend to prove, is this, That no human Laws are exempt from Faults; ſince thoſe that have been looked upon as moſt perfect in their Kind, have been found upon Inquiry to have ſo many.

CHAP. XIV.

Of CANON LAW.

I HAVE no Deſign to bring Contempt upon the ancient CANONS, which were doubtleſs very well fitted for the Occaſions of the Church in its purer Ages; having been framed by Men of primitive Simplicity, in free and conciliar Debates, without any ambitious Regards. That which is juſtly complained of, is, that theſe Canons are too much neglected, and a new Sort of Diſcipline erected in the Church, eſtabliſhed upon different Foundations, and oft-times for different Ends with the former; which is ſo notorious, that it has given Occaſion to a Diſtinction amongſt ſome Members of the Church of *Rome*,

Rome, betwixt the Old and New Law: Eſpecially amongſt the *French*, who pretend that the *Gallican Privileges* are chiefly Remainders of the ancient Canons, which they have preſerved againſt the Encroachments of the *Roman* Pontiff. For that Prelate having taken advantage of the Fall of the *Roman* Empire, and of the Confuſion among his Neighbours, upon the Inundation of the *Goths* and *Vandals*, and other barbarous People, and of the Ignorance that enſued thereon, made a pretty eaſy ſhift to erect a New Empire, and for its Support it was neceſſary to contrive and frame a New Law. I ſhall not recount the ſeveral Advances that were made in the ſeveral Ages; *Iſidore*'s Collection was the great and bold Stroke, which tho' in its main Parts it has been ſince diſcovered (*a*) to be as impudent a Forgery as ever was, yet to this Day ſtands recorded for good Authority in the Canon Law.

(*a*) *V. Blond. Pſeudo. If. & Tur. Vat.*

THE two principal Parts of this Law are, the *Decree* and the *Decretals*, which, to give them the greater Face of

Authority, anſwer to the *Pandects* and *Code* in the Civil Law: For as the *Pandects* contain the Anſwers and Opinions of famous Lawyers: and the *Code*, the Decrees made, and Sentences given by Emperors; ſo the Decree conſiſts chiefly of the Opinions of the Fathers and Definitions of Councils, and the Decretals of the occaſional Sentences and Decrees of Popes. As to the *Clementines* and *Extravagants*, which may anſwer to the Novels, they are only Supplements to the other two Parts, and we have yet no Inſtitutes in the Canon Law: For as to *Lancelottus*'s Book of Inſtitutes, which Dr. *Duck* ſeems to make a Part of the *Corpus*, he is therein miſtaken, if it be his Opinion; for wanting Sanction and Authority (*b*), it is only yet a private Work.

(*b*) *Douj. Hiſt. du Droit Can. Par. 2. Ch. 20.*

THE Decree carries Contradiction in its very Title, being *Concordantia Diſcordantium Canonum*, or a Concordance of diſagreeing Canons: Or, if there were none in the Title, I doubt there are too many in the Body of the Work, which

have occaſioned innumerable Gloſſes, and buſied the Canoniſts in reconciling them, It having been compiled by *Gratian*, in an ignorant Age, we ought not to be too nice in examining it; and perhaps it were unreaſonable to require too much Accuracy amongſt ſo much Ignorance: And therefore if his Style in *Latin* be ſomewhat coarſe; or if in quoting a *Greek* Father or Council, he miſtakes their Meaning, or gives a wrong one, that might eaſily be forgiven him, *Greek* being a Language that was not underſtood in that Age; and was rather the Misfortune of the Time, than his own: But then if he gives us ſuch Fathers and Councils as have no Being; or if he miſtakes a Father for a Council, or a Council for a Father; this ſurely is not ſo pardonable; and yet this is what he has been charged with (*c*) by Authors of his own Communion. And among the Jeſuits, who are not uſually wanting in the Cauſe of their Church, *Bellarmine* owns, that he has quoted a Heretick inſtead of a Father. And the poor Monk having probably never ſeen many of the

(*c*) *Ant. Ang. De Emend. Great. Dial.* 1, *&c.*

Decrees and Councils that he had Occaſion to uſe, nor traced his Authorities to their Fountains, but having made uſe of others Collections, it was impoſſible but he ſhould fall into Miſtakes; which are ſo numerous, eſpecially in the Names of Perſons and Places, that a Man had need of good Skill in Hiſtory, and of a New Geography, to underſtand him aright; and without ſuch Helps, one may eaſily loſe himſelf in traverſing the Decree.

IT might be expected, that he ſhould be pretty exact in the Names of Popes, theſe being his Law-givers, whoſe Authority he makes uſe of upon all Occaſions; and yet even in theſe he ſometimes miſcarries, and gives us ſuch Names as were never heard of in ancient Story. I can never read him, but he puts me in mind of a late noted Author, who has given us a *Church Hiſtory of Biſhops and their Councils:* For as in that Book you may meet with a Council at *Arauſican* (*d*), another at *Toletane*, and a third at *Vienne* near *France*, with other

(*d*) *V. Mr. B. & Dr. M's Anſ.*

others as remote from Knowledge as theſe are; ſo in *Gratian* you may find like Miſtakes, only altering the Language, a *Concilium Auraſicenſe*, *Anquiritanum*, *Biſpalenſe*, and more of the like Nature. One would be tempted to think, that Mr. *B.* had ſtudied the Canon Law, and had borrowed his Authorities from thence.

AFTER ſo much Ignorance we are not to wonder, if *Gratian* have no very favourable Opinion of human Learning, which is condemned in the Decree, more particularly Poetry and Logic: Thoſe of the higheſt Order in the Church, even Biſhops themſelves (*e*), are forbid to read Books of heathen Learning; and St. *Jerome*'s Authority is urged, who was reproved by an Angel for reading *Cicero*. It is true, the Canoniſts endeavour to reconcile this, by alledging other Places in the Decree, where Learning is allowed, and by ſhewing it to be *Gratian*'s Way, to cite differing Canons and Opinions to the ſame Purpoſe; and I will grant ſo much if they pleaſe; but then it can be

(*e*) *V. Diſtinct.* 37. *Epiſcopus Gentilium libros non legat.*

no great Commendation of a Law, that it contains ſuch contrary Opinions, that it muſt be another Man's Work to reconcile them. Nor does his Morality exceed his Learning; the Decree in caſe of two Evils, the one of which is unavoidable, allows us to chuſe the leſs (*f*); which although the Canoniſts would underſtand of the Evil of Puniſhment, yet it ſeems pretty plain from the Text, and the Inſtances there produced, that it muſt be underſtood of the Evil of Sin; in which Senſe the Caſe can ever happen, unleſs we will admit of a Neceſſity of Sinning; which is as impoſſible in Morality, as any the greateſt Difficulty can be in Nature. That which follows in the 34th Diſtinction is yet worſe, *Is qui non habet uxorem, & pro uxore Concubinam habet, à Communione non repellatur*; which in Modeſty I forbear to tranſlate, and could hardly have believed it to have been in *Gratian*: And when I firſt met with it there, I thought it had been only to be found in ſome old Editions, and concluded with myſelf, it muſt be amended in that more correct and authorized

(*f*) *Diſtinct.* 13.

riſed Edition by *Gregory* XIII, but was ſtill more ſurpriſed, when I found it ſtand there uncorrected, as if there had been no Hurt done. I think nothing can be ſaid worſe, unleſs what is ſaid by the learned *Ant. Auguſtinus* in his fifteenth Dialogue of his *Emendation*, to be in ſome Books of *Gratian*, be ſo; *Qui non habet uxorem, loco illius Concubinam habere debet.* If any thing can be ſaid worſe of them, than they have ſaid themſelves, it may be had in *Luther (g)*, who began the Reformation with burning the Canon Law; and in Vindication of what he had done, made a Collection of ſuch Articles, as were moſt liable to give Offence. I have not yet compared his Quotations with the Text, and therefore do not put them down; but if they be faithful, I am ſure there is enough to give a Man a hard Opinion of the Canon Law.

(g) *Oper. Tom. 2. p. 120. Wit.*

THE Decretals, tho' not altogether ſo groſs as the Decree, are more imperious, having appeared in the World, when the Papal Power was grown to its full Height; and

and having been compiled by *Gregory* IX. and conſiſting principally of the Conſtitutions of *Innocent* III. the firſt of whom wag'd almoſt a continual War with an Emperor, and the latter ſubjugated a King, and called him his *Vaſſal*, nothing better could be expected. For though ſeveral Conciliar Decrees and Canons were intermixed with the Papal Conſtitutions, yet they are with ſuch Exceptions and Reſervations to the Pope's diſpenſing Power and abſolute Dominion, that they became uſeleſs: Popes were now become the Fountain of all Power, and both Princes and Councils were brought under their Obedience. It is expreſsly ſaid in the Decretals *(b)*, *That no Councils have prefixed Laws to the Church of* Rome, *inaſmuch as all Councils do borrow their Authority from that Church, and the Papal Authority is excepted in them all.* And *Innocent*, in the Title *De Majoritate*, exalts the Papal Power as much above the Regal, as Spiritual Things are better than Temporal, or the Soul ſuperior to the Body; and having compared theſe two Powers to the

(b) *Lib.* 1. *Tit.* 6. *Cap.* 4.

two

two great Lights in the Firmament, infers from thence, That the Pontifical Authority is as much ſuperior to the Regal, as the Sun is greater than the Moon: Upon which there ariſing ſome Difference concerning the Proportion of Magnitude betwixt theſe two Luminaries, and conſequently betwixt theſe two other great Powers; the Gloſs does learnedly refer us to *Ptolemy's Almageſt*, to adjuſt the Proportion. But I need not cite particular Conſtitutions, a good Part of the Decretals turning upon this Point, and reſolving all into a Monarchical Power at *Rome*: For which Reaſon the five Books of *Gregory (i)* have not yet been received in *France*, without Reſtrictions, no more than the Sixth Book of *Boniface* VIII. has been.

(i) *Doujat. Hiſt. du Droit Can. Par. 2. Ch.* 15, 17.

THE *Clementines*, notwithſtanding a good Part of them were given in a pretended General Council at *Vienne* in *France*, yet are no Conciliar Decrees, only the Conſtitutions of *Clement* V. Such having been the Manner of ſome of the late Weſtern Councils, that the Biſhops

Biſhops were only Aſſeſſors or Adviſers, or at the moſt Aſſenters, and the Pope alone defined in a pretty abſolute Manner; and therefore they are not ſtiled Decrees of ſuch a Council, only the Conſtitutions of *Clement* in the Council at *Vienne*. The *Extravagants* are tedious Things, and want that Majeſty, which Brevity gives to Sanctions and Decrees: Both they and the *Clementines* have this beſides, that having been compiled in the Scholaſtic Age of the Church, they are mixed with Theological Queſtions, and are as much Divinity as Law.

NOR is the Gloſs better than the Text, which, however it be of great Authority among the Canoniſts, yet it may be juſtly queſtioned, whether it deſerves ſo much? For to take Things as they riſe, and to go no further than the firſt Page of the Decree: *Gratian* having begun his Book very properly, by diſtinguiſhing betwixt the ſeveral Sorts of Right; and having ſaid that *Jus* was ſo called, becauſe it was *Juſt*; the Gloſs upon

upon this obſerves, that there is a Right that is neither Equitable nor Juſt *(k)*, and produceth Inſtances, that are neither pertinent, nor prove the Point; and then concludes, that in all Caſes upon a Reaſon, and for publick Good, Rigour is induced againſt natural Equity, and in ſome Caſes without a Reaſon. Take another Inſtance upon the Decretals *(l)*, which beginning with the Symbol of our Faith, upon that the Author of the Gloſs inquires into the Nature of Faith; and having paſſed the Apoſtle's Account, as an imperfect Definition, gives a much more inſufficient one of his own; for which he is juſtly chaſtiſed by *Eraſmus*; And as for the Word *Symbol*, that ſhould not ſeem to be over difficult, he derives it from *Syn* and *Bolus*, which in the Language of the Gloſs does ſignify *Morſellus*: and then inquiring into the Number of Symbols, he adds a fourth to the other three; for no Reaſon that I can ſee, unleſs it were, that they might anſwer to ſo many Goſpels: Beſides other leſs Miſtakes upon the ſame Title, which I paſs over, becauſe the ſame Gloſs

(k) *Quandoque eſt aliquod jus, quod non eſt æquum nec juſtum. Diſt.*

(l) *Lib.* 1. *Tit.* 1.

Gloſs ſays, that *Modicum quid non nocet*, and cites the Decretals (*m*) for it, where *Modica res* is ſaid not to induce Simony; and yet the *Modica res* there mentioned, is a Horſe.

(*m*) *Lib.* 5. *Tit.* 3. *c.* 18.

THE Canoniſts are too numerous to be mentioned here, and therefore I paſs them over; and indeed they generally kept to the Text, and run out upon the Power of the Pope, to the great Diminution of Councils, or indeed of any other Authority. And whereas in that large Collection of Tracts that was publiſhed at *Venice*, there are two groſs Volumes concerning the Power of Popes and their Cardinals; it is very obſervable, that there is ſcarce any thing ſaid of Councils, unleſs by ſuch as will be ſure to ſubject them to the Pope. That haughty Biſhop is their darling theme; and one of them has gone ſo low, as to write a Tract (*n*) about *the Adoration of his Feet:* Nor ſhall I inſiſt upon the differing Opinions and Conſtitutions in the Decree and Decretals, in how many things they interfere and croſs,

(*n*) Joſeph Stevan-vel *Tract. De adoratione Pedum Romani Pontificis*, Tom. 13.

croſs, and in how many more they contradict the Civil Law. *Baptiſta à Sancto Blaſio* has furniſhed us with two hundred Contradictions betwixt the Canon and Civil Law: *Zanetin* has diſcovered a great many Differences of the ſame Kind; and I ſuppoſe it were no hard Matter to ſwell the Account yet higher: But I leave thoſe we have already, to be reconciled by the Learned in the Law.

That I may do all Right to the Canon Law, it muſt be own'd, that the Canoniſts have interpreted the Word Concubina *in a Senſe of near Affinity with Wife: In the beſt Senſe it is bad enough, and has been juſtly cenſured.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

Of PHYSICK.

IF any Credit may be given to *Pliny* (*a*), we ſhall have no Reaſon to boaſt of the Invention of Phyſick, two great Operations in that Art having been owing to two inconſiderable Creatures. Bleeding and Purging have been taught us by the *Hippopotamus* and *Ibis*; the former of which being over-charged with Blood, breaths a Vein, by rolling himſelf among the ſharp Reeds of the *Nile*; and the latter ſucking in the Salt-water, adminiſters a Cathartick, by turning her Bill upon her Fundament. I will not vouch for my Author, (whom, if I would make uſe of, it ſhould be to a different Purpoſe, in

(*a*) *Lib.* 8. c. 26, 27.

in ſhewing, how little Reliance there is upon our Natural Hiſtory) although the Account he gives here of Phyſick may be as true as theirs is, who fetch its Original from *Æſculapius* and *Apollo*.

IT is doubtleſs ancient; Mens Neceſſity and Deſire of Health did put them early upon this Search; and *Hippocrates*, who lived two thouſand Years ago, has left a Treatiſe concerning *Ancient Phyſick:* So that it was ancient in his Time. But the Phyſick then in uſe was chiefly Emperical: *Hippocrates* brought in the rational Way; and what he did in this Art, did ſo far ſurpaſs others Labours, that their Works are in a manner loſt and forgot; and *Hippocrates*, who was then a Modern, is to us a very ancient Author. His Age gave him Authority; and although that, and his ſhort Way of Writing, have rendered him leſs intelligible to ordinary Readers, yet he was almoſt univerſally followed: His *Aphoriſms* have been look'd upon as Maxims; and *Macrobius* (*b*) ſpeaks of his Knowledge in ſuch lofty Strains, as are only agreeable

(*b*) *Hippocrates— qui tam fallere quam falli neſcit. Lib.* 1.

agreeable to GOD Almighty: Notwithſtanding, of late he has been diſcovered to be a frail Man, his *Aphoriſms* have been examined, and the Danger detected, in blindly following great Names; and how miſchievous the Conſequences may have been, in an implicit Submiſſion to all his Rules, may appear from one, which once crudely ſwallowed, has coſt ſo many Lives; all which might have been ſaved, and the contrary Practice been ventured upon ſooner, which is now found (*c*) to be not only ſafe, but ſalutary.

(*c*) Boyle *uſ. Exper. Phil. part.* 2. *p.* 5.

GALEN, as he differs from *Hippocrates* in ſome Things, ſo he follows him in the main; and both in Explaining his Author, and where he gives us his own Sentiments, is ſomewhat tedious: He tires and diſtracts his Reader as much by being too large, as the other does by ſaying too little; which yet might be excuſed, had he in ſo many groſs Volumes and different Treatiſes, left us a compleat Body of Phyſick. But this he is ſo far from having done, that it

it ſcarce ſeems to have been in his Deſign; moſt of his Pieces having been undertaken with particular Views, either to gratify Friends, or as Helps of Memory, or Exerciſes of Invention. His Anatomical Pieces, which have been cried up above Meaſure, have been leſs admired, ſince nicer Obſervations have been made in Anatomy, than he was capable of making; and thoſe which he has made, are often erroneous, for want of a comparative Anatomy, in comparing and diſtinguiſhing betwixt the Bodies of Men and Brutes: Moſt of his Obſervations having been made upon the latter, and it being queſtionable whether he ever ſaw the Diſſection of a human Body. Even his Treatiſe *De Uſu Partium* has been cenſured, as in many Things grounded upon Inferences of his own, rather than upon Obſervations from Experience and View; and the Parts are deſcribed there in ſuch Order, as none will think fit to imitate, unleſs any Man can find Method, in beginning with the Hand, and proceeding to the Foot, and ſo up again to the

Belly. And though he has been remarkable for his Care and Tenderneſs of Life, which he has expreſſed, as in other Inſtances, ſo particularly in being againſt publiſhing exquiſite Treatiſes of the Nature of Poiſons; yet I queſtion whether it will be thought another Inſtance of it, that he ſometimes took away ſix Pounds of Blood (*d*) in a Fever; and bled his Patients, till by Fainting they could bear no longer; for which he was twitted in his own Time, as appears from his Books (*e*), and was ſaid to work Cures, by murdering Diſeaſes.

(*d*) *De Urand. Rat. per Sang. miſ. cap.* 14.

(*e*) *De Meth. Med. l.* 9. *c.* 4.

WHATEVER Fault he had, muſt have been derived upon his Succeſſors; for as he commented upon *Hippocrates*, ſo the following Phyſicians have copied *Galen*: The *Greeks*, *Oribaſius*, *Ægineta*, and *Ætius*, have in a manner tranſcribed him; and *Avicen*, and the *Arabians*, have done little more than tranſlate *Galen* into their own Tongue: And their Tranſlations having not been over faithful, and the Verſion double; firſt, from the *Greek* to the *Arabic*, and from that back

back again into the *Latin*, they cannot be depended upon without eminent Hazard, eſpecially in the Names of Drugs and Plants, where the Miſtake in a Word may endanger a Life. They were ſubtle Men, and moſt of them Logicians; accordingly they have given Method, and ſhed Subtility upon their Author, and little more can be ſaid for them.

THE Chymiſts have appeared with ſo much Oſtentation, and with ſuch Contempt of the *Arabians* and *Galen*, that we have been made to expect Wonders from their Performances. *Paracelſus*, who would be thought the Head of a Sect, has treated the *Galeniſts* ſo rudely, as if they were the moſt ignorant Men in the World, and had little Skill beyond a Plaiſter or a Purge; Tho' neither ought he to have vaunted ſo much of his Diſcoveries; one of his great Admirers (*f*) having ſhewn, that ſome Part of his Skill was ſtole: And it is ſome Prejudice againſt him, that a Man who pretended to ſuch immortal Reme-

(*f*) *Helmont Chym. Prin.*

dies, ſhould himſelf die in his 47th Year; whereas *Hippocrates* and *Galen* are ſaid to have lived beyond an Hundred.

If there be any thing certain in Chymiſtry, it ought to be their firſt Principles which the Chymiſts have ſubſtituted in the Place of others, which they have thought fit to explode; and pretend, that theirs are ſo evident from the *Analyſis* of Bodies, that there can be no room to doubt: And yet whereas at firſt we had only three of theſe Principles, their Number is already ſwoln to five; and who knows whether they may ſtop there? or whether their Practice be better grounded than the Principles they go on? For though great Cures have been effected by Chymical Preſcriptions, and thoſe too in a manner leſs cloying and nauſeous than the former Practice would admit of, by ſeparating the Fæces with which the *Galenical* Medicines are clogg'd; yet the Queſtion will be, whether they be not attended with other Inconveniences? Whether they be equally ſafe, and have no dangerous Conſequences

quences to diſcourage their Uſe? It will not be denied, that the Chymical Preparations are more vigorous and potent in their Effects, than the *Galenical* are; and often work ſuch Cures, as the other groſs Medicines have not Activity enough to effect: But then, as their Activity is great, is not the Danger ſo too? And does not the ſame Power that enables them to heal, empower them to deſtroy? And whilſt the Cures are recorded, are not the Miſcarriages forgot? Have not our enterpriſing Chymiſts ſometimes preſerved Life, only to make it the more miſerable, and ſaved their Patients, by ruining their Conſtitutions? Have not their ſtrong *Opiates* often diſordered the Head; and their too free Uſe of *Mercury*, *Antimony*, &c. the whole Habit of the Body? If ſuch Cures be offered me, I hardly accept them. He is the true Phyſician, who attends to all poſſible Conſequences; who does not heal one Diſeaſe, by procuring us a worſe, but reſtores ſuch a Life as a Man can enjoy: But where ſhall this perfect Man be found?

Some have gone as far as *China* to find him out; of which Peoples Skill ſuch Wonders have been reported, as the Chymiſts themſelves can hardly pretend to. The Circulation of the Blood, which with us is a modern Diſcovery, has been known there, according to *Voſſius (g)*, four Thouſand Years; they have ſuch Skill in Pulſes as is not to be imagined, but by thoſe that are acquainted with them; and the *Arabians* are there ſaid to have borrowed thence their Knowledge in Phyſick. Even the Miſſionaries, who have Reaſon to know them beſt, grant that there is ſomewhat ſurpriſing in their Skill of Pulſes *(h)*, and tell us they have made Obſervation in Medicine Four Thouſand Years, and that when all the Books in *China* were ordered to be burnt by the Emperor *Chiohamti*, thoſe in Phyſick were preſerved by a particular Exception. But yet they likewiſe acquaint us, that moſt of their Skill is built upon Obſervations, which have not been improved to ſuch Purpoſes, as they would have been by the

(g) *Var. Obſervat.* p. 70, 71.

(h) *LeLet.* 8.

the *Europeans*; and that for want of Philoſophy and Anatomy, the great Foundations of Medicine, their Notions are confuſed, and their Practice in ſome Things ridiculous. The *Chineſe* are an unaccountable ſort of People, ſtrangely compounded of Knowledge and Ignorance: They have had Printing among them, and Gunpowder, and the Uſe of the Compaſs, long before they came among the *Europeans*; and yet for want of due Improvement, theſe uſeful Inventions have not turned to any great Account; and Phyſick has had the ſame Fate: So that after all our Travel, the moſt conſiderable Improvements in this Art, are moſt probably to be found at Home; and being ſo near, need not be much enquired into.

WE have generally Men enough ready to publiſh Diſcoveries, whether real or pretended, whilſt Deficiencies in moſt Arts are often concealed, or paſſed by in ſilence. What Noiſe have we had for ſome Years about Tranſplantation of Diſeaſes, and Transfuſion of Blood; the latter

latter of which has taken up ſo much Room in the *Journal des Scavans*, and Philoſophical Tranſactions; and the *Engliſh* and *French* have contended for the Diſcovery; which notwithſtanding, as far as I can ſee, is like to be of no Uſe or Credit to either Nation. The retrieving the ancient *Britannica* has made no leſs Noiſe, *Muntingius* has writ a Book upon it, and we were made to hope for a Specific againſt the Scurvy: After all, it is like to come to nothing, and Men loſe their Teeth and die, as they did before. The Circulation of the Spirits is a third Invention, which if I might have leave to judge, I ſhould think ſcarce capable of being proved; for neither are the Spirits themſelves viſible, nor, as far as I know, does any Ligature, or Tumor in the Nerve, diſcover their Motion. The Circulation of the Blood has indeed been ſaid to be demonſtrated to Senſe by Monſieur *Leeuwenhoek*, by the Help of his Glaſſes, and Men have been looked upon as dull that will not ſee it. I will not queſtion the Fact, tho' I cannot but obſerve that

a late

a late *Italian* (*i*) Author has in effect done it for me, who either has not met with *M. Leeuwenhoek* and his Experiments, or cannot ſee ſo clearly in his Glaſſes as he does; which, however it be, ought to be ſome Check upon Aſſurance. I might enumerate a World of ſuch like Particulars; *Anwald's Panacea* diſcuſſed by *Libavius*, and *Butler*'s Stone ſo much magnified by *Helmont*, were as much talked of in their own Time, as moſt Things we can pretend to, and yet they are dead, and have been buried with their Authors.

(*i*) *Hom. Piſo Cremonæ An.* 90. *ap. Act. Lipſ.*

THE moſt conſiderable real Diſcoveries that have been lately made, have been in Anatomy, and Botany: No Man in his right Wits will conteſt the former; though the Diſcoveries in that Kind have been rather in the Parts of the Body, than in the Humours and Spirits and Blood, which are the principal Seat of Health as well as Diſeaſe: For the firſt ſeem deſigned for Strength and Motion, and fall not improperly under a Surgeon's Skill; the latter are the

the Seat of Life, and under the Conſideration of Phyſick, and are yet imperfectly underſtood. Till theſe be thoroughly known, which perhaps they never will, there will be one Fundamental Deficiency in our Phyſick.

ANOTHER great Deficiency was obſerved by my Lord *Bacon* (*k*) in his Time, that will I believe always hold, and that is in Comparative Anatomy: He then granted, as we may with more Safety, that ſimple Anatomy had been clearly handled, and that the ſeveral Parts had been diligently obſerved and deſcribed; but the ſame Parts in different Perſons had not been duly compared, nor have they yet been; though we may differ as much in the inward Parts of our Bodies as we do in our outward Features, and that Difference may occaſion great Variety in Application and Cure. This is a Deficiency that is not like to have a ſpeedy Remedy, requiring more Diſſections than moſt Men have Opportunity of making.

(*k*) Adv. of Learn. *L.* 4. *c.* 2.

NOR

NOR are the Deficiencies leſs in the Botanick Part; for tho' this ſort of Knowledge be mightily enlarged, ſince the Diſcovery of the *Eaſt* and *Weſt-Indies*, by opening a vaſt Field, and giving a much larger Range to it than it had before; yet the great Difficulty remains ſtill to be overcome. Our Herbals, it is true, are ſufficiently ſtored with Plants, and we have made a tolerable ſhift to reduce them to *Claſſes*, and to deſcribe them by Marks and Signatures, ſo far as to diſtinguiſh them from one another: But as their Characteriſtick Marks are known, are their Virtues ſo too? I believe no Man will venture to affirm it. The Qualities of many of our Plants and Simples are yet in the Dark, or ſo uncertain in their Operations, that they are rather Matter of Curioſity, than Subjects of Skill: Or where ſome of their Virtues are too remarkable to be concealed, yet they act one way ſingly, and quite otherwiſe in Mixture and Compoſition; or they may have one Effect when outwardly applied, and a quite different

different one when taken inwardly, after they have undergone ſo many Alterations in the Blood and Stomach, as they muſt do, before they can reach the Part affected; and they may again vary, according to the different Temper of the Bodies to which they are applied. It is not enough to ſay, their Natures may be known by being chymically reſolved; for their Effects are often very diſproportionable to the Principles and Parts that reſult from the *Analyſis*: There are other Parts more ſubtle, and yet moſt active and vigorous in their Operation, that act upon the Spirits, as the groſſer Parts do upon the Blood and Humours, and thoſe the ſubtileſt Chymiſts, and the moſt exquiſite *Analyſis* will not be able to reach.

In ſhort, whether we conſider our Bodies, or our Medicines, Phyſick muſt be the moſt uncertain Thing imaginable: Our Bodies are more compounded and unequal than other Bodies are; moſt other Creatures live upon a ſimple Diet, and are regular in their Appetites; whereas Man feeds almoſt upon every thing,

thing, Fleſh and Fiſh, Fruits and Plants, from the Fruit of our Gardens to the Muſhroom upon the Dunghil; and where Appetite fails, Invention is called in to ſwell the Account; high Sauces and rich Spices are fetched from the *Indies*, which occaſion ſtrong Fermentations and infinite Diſorder in the Blood and Humors: Hence proceed ſuch Variety of Diſeaſes as perplex and diſtract the Phyſician's Skill. A ſound Body and healthy Conſtitution is eaſily reſtored when out of Order; Nature in a great Meaſure does its own Work, (a noted Inſtance whereof we have in *Cornaro* in *Leſſius*, who by Regularity and Temperance had brought an infirm Body to ſuch a Temper, that he was not troubled with any Diſeaſe, and any Wound in him would in a manner heal itſelf;) whereas in a diſordered Body, every little thing is a Wound and Diſeaſe, and a Phyſician muſt give a new Conſtitution, before he can perfect the Cure; this is a hard Tryal upon our Phyſician, and yet by our way of living we often require it.

It is the harder, becauſe his Medicines and Methods of Cure will not enable him to work Wonders: For though our *Materia Medica* be large enough, and to look into our Diſpenſatories, one would think no Diſeaſe incurable; yet the Miſchief of it is, all thoſe fine Medicines do not always anſwer in the Application, nor have they been found ſo ſovereign in our Bodies, as they are in our Books. All which Things have ſo diſtracted our Phyſicians, that they vary even in the moſt common Method: At one Time they keep their Patients ſo cloſe and warm, as almoſt to ſtifle them with Care, and all on a ſudden the cold *Regimen* is in Vogue: In one Age *Alkalies* are in Faſhion, and in the next *Acids* begin to recover Credit; *Antimony* at one Time is next to Poiſon, and again, the moſt innocent thing in the World, if duly prepared: Bleeding is practiſed in one Nation, and condemned by their Neighbours; ſome People are prodigal of their Blood, and others ſo ſparing, as if ſo much Life and Blood

went together; *Helmont* and his Followers are for the latter Way; *Galen* and *Willis*, and their Followers, encourage the former: And all of them, as you will imagine, with equal Assurance.

CHAP. XVI.

Of CRITICAL LEARNING.

CRITICISM, as it is uſually practiſed, is little more than an Art of finding Faults, and thoſe commonly little ones too, and ſuch as are of ſmall Importance to the Scope and Deſign of an Author. Monſieur *Bayle* was ſenſible of this, whoſe firſt Deſign was to publiſh a Dictionary of Faults, but was diverted from his Purpoſe, by his Friends repreſenting to him, that they were not conſiderable enough to be inſiſted on: And yet he hath that to ſay for himſelf, that they were ſuch as were taken notice of by *Scaliger*,

Scaliger, and other noted Criticks; either ſome miſtake in a Name, Time, Place, or other minute Circumſtance. The Truth of it is, Criticiſm is at a low Ebb; Men will be finding Faults in Authors, and yet our Store is well near exhauſted, for there are few Faults in this Kind that have not been taken notice of.

ERASMUS, and the firſt Set of Criticks, had Matter enough to work upon; a long Age of Ignorance had cut out ſufficient Employment, by vicious Copies, and obtruding ſpurious for genuine Authors; the diſtinguiſhing of which was a Work of Uſe and Skill: But after the Buſineſs is pretty well done, the Vein of Criticiſing ſtill continues; Men will play ſmall Games rather than want Employment; ſo that our modern Criticks have uſually either degenerated into Grammarians, or if they ſoar higher, it is too often, by venturing too freely upon thoſe Books, which ought to be handled with greater Tenderneſs. Their Buſineſs ſometimes

is in finding Faults where there are none, or in perverting the Senſe, that they might make Room for Correction. And for as much as theſe Men do find Faults with all the World, they have no Reaſon to take it amiſs, if one who is none of their Number, does find one or two in them. I ſhall ſeek for no more (nor have I Room in the Compaſs of a Chapter) but they ſhall be in two Criticks of Name; one of whom has writ the *Art of Criticiſm*; the other *A Critical Hiſtory of the Old and New Teſtament*.

THE former, Monſieur *Le Clerc*, is as free in his Cenſures as any Man I ever met with, and oft-times as unhappy. He begins with *Eraſmus*, for I take the firſt Thing I meet with, whom he expoſeth *(a)* as ignorant in Geography, for having in his Notes upon *Acts* xxviii. miſtaken *Rhegium*, a City in *Italy*, for a Town in *Sicily*; and for having took *Melita* an Iſland, either for *Mitylene* a City, or the ſame Iſland that is ſituate in the *Mediterranean*, or *African* Sea, for an obſcure Iſland

(a) *Ars Crit. cap.* 1. *p.* 13. *Ed. Lond.*

Iſland in the *Adriatick*: And then falls foul on him, as a Man that had ſcarce ever ſeen a Geographical Map. It ſeemed very ſtrange to me, that *Eraſmus*, who is known to have writ his Commentaries upon the New Teſtament, with the Map of the *Roman* Empire always before him, ſhould be guilty of ſuch Errors in Geography, and therefore I had the Curioſity to conſult the Author. I have not ſo bad an Edition of *Eraſmus* as *M. Le Clerc* quotes, but I conſulted the worſt Edition I could meet with; in that he is ſo far from placing the *Rhegium* in *Sicily*, that he expreſsly ſays, it is a City in *Italy*, and corrects St. *Jerome* for having been guilty of ſo groſs a Miſtake: And as to *Melita* the Iſland, he directly diſtinguiſheth it from *Mitylene* the City, which Iſland he placeth betwixt *Africa* and *Sicily*, a Situation very different from that which *M. Le Clerc* endeavours to faſten upon him.

MONSIEUR *Le Clerc* in the next place is angry with *Eraſmus* for quoting *Hugo Carrenſis*, being an Author of no

Credit, and one who lived in the Scholaſtick Age, and ſeems to think he was led into his Miſtake, by truſting ſo mean an Authority. It is true, *Eraſmus* does quote *Hugo Carrenſis*, but it is only to make Sport with him, as he does ſometimes with the Schoolmen; and Monſieur *Le Clerc* needed not have gone above ten Lines further for a convincing Proof of this, where *Eraſmus* calls up-
(*b*) *In Act. Apoſt. c.* 28. *v.* 11. on his Reader to laugh *(b)* at *Hugo Carrenſis* for his critical Obſervation upon the Sign of *Caſtor* and *Pollux*.

WELL! but *Eraſmus* is not yet clear of Monſieur *Le Clerc*, for he remembers that *Eraſmus* ſomewhere in his Notes upon St. *Jerome*'s Epiſtles, miſtakes the City of *Mitylene* for the Iſland *Melita*, only he forgets the particular Place, but it is ſomewhere, where St. *Jerome* mentions St. *Paul*'s Shipwreck. I always ſuſpect a Man where he forgets the Place, and therefore I will help his Memory; it is in St. *Jerome*'s Epiſtle to *Oceanus*; in the firſt Tome of *Eraſmus*'s Edition; where, if *Eraſmus* reads *Mitylene*, I ſuppoſe

poſe it was only becauſe it was the ſame Word which was uſed by his Author St. *Jerome*; both of them make it an Iſland, and expreſsly the ſame where St. *Paul* ſuffered Shipwreck, and without queſtion the ſame that *Eraſmus* meant in his Notes upon the *Acts*. If *Eraſmus* be to be blamed in any thing, it is for making St. *Jerome* read *Mitylene* inſtead of *Melita*, for in all the *MSS.* that I have ſeen of that Father, and I have ſeen more than one, the reading is *Melita*: But I dare ſay that is more than *M. Le Clerc* knows. *Eraſmus* may have had Miſtakes in Criticiſm; for though he tells us of himſelf, that his Care in publiſhing St. *Jerome* was ſuch, that it coſt him almoſt as much Pains in reſtoring his Works, as it did the Author in writing them; yet *Marianus Victorius* (*c*) pretends to have made Fifteen Hundred Corrections upon him barely in the Edition of that Father; and the *Benedictines*, no doubt, have added more. But as for *M. Le Clerc*'s Attacks, I dare be confident, they will neither hurt St. *Jerome*, nor any

(*c*) *Epiſt. Pio Quarto.*

of his Editors; tho' he falls as foul upon the *Benedictines* as he does upon *Eraſmus*. He would gladly make the World believe, that they underſtand not *Greek*; and indeed they pretend leſs that way, and therefore their chief Care hitherto has been in the *Latin* Fathers, in which they have deſerved great Commendation: But as to *M. Le Clerc*'s Critical Obſervation (*d*) which he paſſeth upon them with ſo much Contempt, it is ſo far ſhort of Proof to me, that I cannot but think their Miſtake better than his Correction, I am ſure more agreeable to St. *Jerome*'s Meaning.

(*d*) *Tom.* 2. *cap.* 13.

He has paſs'd the ſame Cenſure in another Work (*e*) upon one who has leſs deſerved it, the learned Sorbonniſt *Cotelerius*, who has not been ſuſpected of want of *Greek*, till *M. Le Clerc* took him to taſk; he has caught him tripping in his *Greek*, where all Things were plain, and tells us, he has ſhewn it in his Notes upon *Barnabas* and *Clement*, For my Part I can meet with no material Corrections upon either of theſe Authors;

(*e*) *Patres Apoſtol. Ant.* 98.

thors, and the only Thing he chargeth him with in his Preface is, That he renders κεφαλαιωδῶς, *capitulatim*, which in *M. Le Clerc*'s Opinion, ſhould be *ſummatim*, which in reading our Animadverter, a Man would think *Cotelerius* had done, either in *Barnabas* or *Clement*'s Epiſtles. I have read over haſtily theſe three Epiſtles. I will not be over poſitive, but I am pretty confident the Word does not occur in any one of the three; and if it be to be met with in the *Clementines*, it is nothing to the Animadverter's Purpoſe; for we are not to expect to meet always with Claſſical *Greek* there, or with Words always in the Senſe of Claſſical Authors. *Cotelerius* (*f*) has rendered the Verb κεφαλαιόω, as *M. Le Clerc* would have it; and if he hath rendered the Adverb otherwiſe, it is probable it was not from Miſtake, but Judgment. Had *M. Le Clerc* conſidered, that there is a ſort of Eccleſiaſtical *Greek*, very different from the Claſſical, he would have been more reſerved in his Cenſures. But this is a ſort of *Greek* wherewith he ſeems not

(*f*) *Barnab. Eſ.* p. 1.

to

to be much acquainted. St. *Jerome*, who underſtood this ſort of *Greek* better than either of them, has rendered ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι by *recapitulare* (g); and though *M. Le Clerc* ſhould oppoſe, I muſt think St. *Jerome* a good Tranſlator.

(g) *Ad Epheſ. cap.* 1. *v.* 10.

OUR Hiſtorian is a Critick of a higher Form, but ſets out as unfortunately as *M. Le Clerc* has done: To recommend the Critical Art to the World, he tells us, That in St. *Jerome*'s Time, ſeveral Ladies of Quality made Criticiſm their Study; and to prove this (h), quotes an Epiſtle of that Father, to *Sunnia* and *Fretella*, which ſhews them to have been knowing in the *Greek* and *Hebrew*. The *Hebrew* was ſo little known in that Age, that perhaps St. *Jerome* was the only Perſon of his Time, that underſtood it perfectly, except the Jewiſh Rabbins, who were his Inſtructors; and this Father *Simon* knows very well: But as to the Father's two Ladies, I can aſſure him, there were none of that Name that underſtood a Word of either Language: For *Sunnia* and *Fretella* were

(h) *Hiſt. Crit. du Vieux Teſt. p.* 1, 2.

were two learned Men of St. *Jerome*'s Acquaintance. Somewhat of this was obſerved by a Friend of *Voſſius (i)*: And if Father *Simon* have any Doubt of the Thing, I have that Epiſtle now before me in two very fair *Manuſcripts*: in both which it is, *Delectiſſimis Fratribus Sunniæ & Fretellæ*. This is no very great Miſtake, but it is always ominous to ſtumble at the Threſhold.

(i) *Let. a M. Juſtel.*

I WILL not trace him through his Miſtakes; I will only note one other, which an *Engliſhman* has better Opportunities of examining than other Men have. Father *Simon (k)* has not taken more Pains upon any one Subject, than he has done upon the ancient *MS. Cambridge* Copy of the Goſpels and Acts of the Apoſtles, and two other Manuſcript Copies of St. *Paul*'s Epiſtles; the one in the King of *France*'s Library; the other in the Library of the *Benedictines* of St. *Germain*: In the *Latin* Copies of which he thinks he has diſcovered the ancient Vulgar *Latin*, as uſed in the Weſtern Church before St. *Jerome*'s Time,

(k) *Hiſt. Crit. du. N.T. c. 30. 31, &c. Hiſt. des Verſ. c. 3. 5, &c.*

Time, to whom we owe the Vulgar now in Uſe. I ſhould be as glad, and would go as far to meet with the ancient Vulgar of the New Teſtament, as any Man ſhall do; but cannot be of Opinion, that Father *Simon* or *Morinus* have met with it in theſe *Manuſcripts*. For to ſpeak only to the *Cambridge* Copy: Any one that has obſerved that Manuſcript, knows, that the *Latin* Copy anſwers the *Greek* ſo exactly, that there are very few various Readings: So that if the *Latin* be ancient, as the Vulgar undoubtedly was almoſt as ancient as the Preaching of the Goſpel at *Rome*, the *Greek* probably is ſo too; and it will hardly be imagined, that had there been a *Latin* Copy ſo exactly agreeing with the *Greek* Original, before St. *Jerome*'s Time, that he would have ventured upon, or have thought a new Tranſlation neceſſary. St. *Jerome*'s manner of reforming the ancient Vulgar was, by comparing and reducing it to the *Greek* Original: But here was a Copy already, agreeing with the *Greek*. If it be ſaid the *Greek* in that Manuſcript may be a more

more modern Copy, but ſtill before St. *Jerome*'s Time, and that the *Latin* is tranſlated from it: This may be true, but then the *Latin* is no longer the ancient Vulgar, but a later Verſion.

THERE is one pretty probable way of trying it, by comparing the Citations in the New Teſtament with the ſame Texts, as they ſtand in the ancient Vulgar in the Old. This I have done in the *Pſalms*, and am far from meeting with any exact Agreement: The ſame Obſervation will hold in the Old Eccleſiaſtick Writers, as far as the Vulgar can be traced there; and I believe *Hilary* the Deacon, who had been noted for keeping cloſeſt to the Old Tranſlation, will be no Exception to this Rule. Had Father *Simon* been as quick and diligent in obſerving Differences, as he has been in marking Agreements, perhaps he would not have been ſo haſty in drawing his Concluſion: In many Things there is an Agreement betwixt the ancient and modern Vulgar, but no Man

Man will conclude from thence that they are the ſame.

(*l*) *Hiſt. N. T. c.* 30.

FATHER *Simon* truly obſerves (*l*), that the *Greek* in theſe *Manuſcripts* is very faulty, and grounds an Argument thereupon, that they could not for that Reaſon be brought from *Greece*. Had that Father had a Copy of the *Latin* Verſion of the *Cambridge* Manuſcript, as he has of the *Greek*, he would have found, that the *Latin* is the more faulty of the two; and that not only in the Orthography, but Concord. For what would he think of *Hic verbus*, John *c.* 21. *v.* 23. Or of *Retiam*, *v.* 6. and repeated, *v.* 8. Or of *Cum eſſet in Meſopotamiam poſteaquam mortuus eſſet in Charris*, inſtead of *Prius quam moraretur in Charan:* Acts 7. *v.* 2. Or of *Eſſet ei Filium*, *v.* 5. Or of *Juſtitias cæpiſſet cum genus noſtrum*, *v.* 19? All which Miſtakes are to be met with in two Chapters, and more which I forbear to mention, as I do not tranſlate thoſe I have mentioned, becauſe I would not uncover the Nakedneſs of this Verſion.

ſion. But tho' Miſtakes of this Kind be ſo common, as to occur pretty frequently in this *Manuſcript*, yet they are not very agreeable to the Style of the Ages before St. *Jerome*. We have enough left us of the ancient Vulgar, to enable us to judge of its Style, by all the Remainders of it we have; though it has not Elegancy, which it did not affect, yet it appears to have been writ with tolerable Purity; whereas the Verſion we are now ſpeaking of, is uncouth and rude, and almoſt barbarous.

WHAT then ſhall we think of it? Whatever the Verſion is, or whenceſoever it is taken, the *MS.* itſelf ſeems to be *Gothick*; and probably both are of the ſame Extraction, and were done after St. *Jerome*'s Time, when the *Goths* had over-run the Empire; and Father *Mabillon* (*m*) the greateſt Judge of *MSS.* of this Age, ſets the ſecond Part of this *MS.* no higher. We have already ſeen the Verſion is rude, and ſuitable enough to theſe Times; and Dr. *Marſhal* (*n*) upon the *Gothick* Goſpels, has obſerved ſuch

(*m*) *De Rediplom.* *p.* 347.

(*n*) *Ad Evang. Goth.* *p.* 403, 484, &c.

ſuch an Agreement betwixt thoſe Goſpels and the *Cambridge Manuſcript*, that he thinks them to be taken from the *Greek* of that Copy; and this Agreement he has ſhewn in ſeveral particular Texts. The Characters in that *MS.* are many of them *Gothick*; and Father *Simon*, who thinks he has met with *Greek* Letters in the *Latin* Copy of the ſecond Part of this *MS.* and grounds an Argument upon it, is undoubtedly miſtaken; for they are only *Gothick* Characters, ſeveral of which have a great Affinity with the *Greek:* The Abbreviations are often the ſame in the *Cambridge MS.* and *Gothick* Goſpels, and the Numbers expreſſed by numeral Letters ι and ϛ are ſometimes pointed ει for ι, put down after the *Gothick* Way; and *Euſebius*'s Canons are placed in the Margin, in a rude manner, without Marks of Diſtinction to make them uſeful, with other *Gothiſms*, that might be obſerved, did I deſign this for any more than a Hint or Specimen. One Thing is too obſervable to be paſſed over, that whereas our Saviour's Genealogy in St.

St. *Luke*, is placed in Columns in the *Gothic* Goſpels, it is put down in the very ſame Manner in the *Cambridge MS.* which is the more remarkable, becauſe the reſt of that *MS.* is writ in long Lines, and the Words run into one another. From all which one would be apt to infer, that this Copy was taken under the *Goths*, that it is compounded of the Ancient and Modern Vulgar, which were both of them in Uſe in the *Gothick* Churches, and particularly in *Spain* two or three Centuries after St. *Jerome*'s Time; tho' in many Ages it differs from them both, as it needs muſt, whilſt it keeps ſo cloſe to a *Greek* Copy, much differing from any Copy, either Printed or Manuſcript that we now have. It has been taken from a Copy fitted for Eccleſiaſtical Uſe: For that it has been taken from ſuch a Copy, appears from the Ἀναγνώσματα, or Leſſons mark'd in the Margin Rubrick-wiſe: and from the Word τέλος, ſometimes put at the End of a Leſſon, to denote the Concluſion of a Reading. That theſe are the Marks of ſuch Copies, has been obſerved by Fa-

ther *Simon* (*o*), and he needed only have applied them to this Manuſcript, to have ſhewn it to have been taken from a Copy of this Nature. I am ſo far ſatisfied of its being taken from ſuch a Copy, that I once thought it to have been fitted for the Churches of the *Greek* Empire, when both *Greek* and *Latin* were ſpoke there, as they were from *Conſtantine*, till after *Juſtinian*; in like manner, as they yet have the Bible in two Tongues in ſuch Places where the People are of two Languages: But I think I have Reaſon to alter my Opinion.

(*o*) *Hiſt. N. T. Ch.* 33.

WHAT Father *Simon* further conjectures concerning the *French* MSS. of St. *Paul*'s Epiſtles, being the Second Part of the *Cambridge* Copy, is undoubtedly true of one of them: For beſides that in a Catalogue of the Books of the New Teſtament, at the End of one of theſe *MSS.* (*p*) the Goſpels are placed in the ſame Order wherein they ſtand in the *Cambridge* Copy, St. *John* immediately after St. *Matthew*, and the Agreeableneſs

(*p*) *Morin. l.* 1. *Exerc.* 2. *c.* 3.

greeableneſs in the Character betwixt the *Cambridge* and *Benedictine* Copy, according to the Specimen of it we have in *Mabillon* (*q*). There is a Fragment of St. *John*'s laſt Epiſtle, betwixt St. *Mark*'s Goſpel and the *Acts of the Apoſtles*, not altogether in the ſame Hand, but in a Verſion ſomewhat different from the preſent Vulgar, which ſhews the Catholick Epiſtles have been there, and that the Book was once intire, bating only the *Revelations*, that were not for ſome Ages ſo univerſally received in the Church.

(*q*) *P.* 347.

IF I have brought the Age of this MS. too low, or leſſened its Authority too much, I ſhall be ready to alter my Opinion upon better Reaſons, for I am not much concerned for the Reputation of a Critick. I hope I ſhall always have a due Concern for Religion and the Church, and that my Opinion ſhould be true, I think, is the Intereſt of both. For his Copy differing ſo much from all others, the leſs Authority we give it, it will be able to do the leſs Hurt. I am

ſure they have ſet it too high, who fetch it from *Irenæus*, or St. *Hilary*, both which Fathers were born before the *Goths* had Letters; for that the Characters are *Gothick*, I think I may be pretty poſitive. For this Reaſon I ſhall never deſire to ſee it printed, though a worthy Perſon ſeems to have that Deſign, and a Scheme has been marked out to that Purpoſe: But I hope that learned Body, in whoſe Cuſtody it is, will have more Regard to the Will of the Donor, whoſe firſt Intention it certainly was, that it ſhould not *(r)* be publiſhed.

(r) *V. Henr. Epiſt. ad Acad. Can.*

ITS various Readings have been given us already in the *Polyglot Bibles*, though not over accurately, and ſufficient Care taken that it ſhall not, *In uno exemplo periclitari:* And what would the Criticks have more? Even Father *Simon* has procured a Copy from *England*, though I much ſuſpect it is no other than thoſe various Readings, the Father tells us, *Morinus* had from *Junius* the Library-keeper of *Cambridge*; by ſuch a Miſtake

take *(ſ)* as another Critick has given us a *Magdeburgh* College at *Oxford*. But of this perhaps too much.

(ſ) Hiſt. N. T. Ch. 30.

I WILL only offer one Criticiſm, in order to wipe off a Blot from the *Engliſh*, that has been unjuſtly caſt upon the Nation, either by the Author or Interpreter. I have already ſaid in another Chapter, that *Chalcocondilas* does report of the *Engliſh*, that upon a Viſit made to a Friend, it is permitted the Stranger by way of Compliment to lie with his Neighbour's Wife: This the learned Interpreter of *Chalcocondilas* does plainly ſay, and it ſtands ſo in the laſt Royal Edition of that Author: But the Word in *Greek* is, κύσαντα *, which one would ſuſpect was rather meant of *Kiſſing:* No doubt ſome wandering *Greek* had been in *England*, and having obſerved our way of kiſſing our Neighbour's Wives, which might as well be let alone, had reported it to *Chalcocon-*

* Κύω *being a proper Word for* Kiſſing, *there can be no great Doubt of the Correction I made, nor needs the Word be thrown into a Gloſſary any otherwiſe than as it ſeems to be there rendered from the* Engliſh.

dilas in a Word of neareſt Affinity in the *Greek*, and thereby given Occaſion to this Miſtake. This Account ſeems ſo probable, that (with Submiſſion to the Criticks) I durſt almoſt venture from thence, to add one other Word to our Gloſſaries.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

Of ORIENTAL LEARNING, JEWISH and ARABIAN.

IT has been an old Queſtion, and much debated among learned Men, whether greater Profit or Inconvenience ariſeth from reading the *Jewiſh* Books. On the one Hand it is alledged, that the *Hebrew* Tongue, and *Jewiſh* Rites and Cuſtoms, can be no way ſo well learned, as from themſelves; and that as in order to underſtand the *Greek* and *Roman* Polity, it is neceſſary to read *Greek* and *Latin* Authors; ſo, if we would be acquainted with the *Jewiſh* Affairs, we cannot learn them better, than from their own Books. On the

other Side, they have been charged with groſs Ignorance, even in their own Affairs; and their Books ſaid to be ſo ſtuffed with Trifles, or, what is worſe, with poiſonous Opinions, that the Profit in Reading them will not countervail the Danger. Accordingly they have met with a very different Fate; at one Time they have been ordered to be read and ſtudied, as by *Clement* the Vth *(a)* in the Council of *Vienne*: And again, the *Talmudick* Books have been adjudged to be burnt, as twelve thouſand Volumes were by publick Order *(b)* only out of one Library at *Cremona*; and had not the famous *Reuchlin* advocated for them under the Emperor *Maximilian*, they had been in Danger of an univerſal Ruin.

(a) *Clement. L. 5. Tit. 1.*

(b) *V. Sixt. Senenſe. L. 2. p. 120.*

In ſuch Variety there may be need of Diſtinction; and therefore the *Jewiſh* Writers may be conſidered two Ways, either as Witneſſes or Interpreters: In the firſt Senſe, they have been faithful Depoſitories, and very uſeful in handing down the ſacred Volumes, and in preſerving the Text intire: In the other Senſe,

Senſe, their Skill or Authority, as Interpreters, has not been thought very conſiderable.

THE great Reaſon whereupon their Books have been valued, has been their ſeeming Antiquity. In the laſt Age, we have been told of Books as old as *Abraham* and *Ezra*, that have had the Fortune to be believed by wiſe Men (*c*); and could their Riſe be traced up and derived from ſuch an Original, they would have Reaſon to be valued: But this Vizor has been taken off, and their Novelty or Impoſture has been detected: *Morinus* has brought down moſt of them ſeveral Centuries from their boaſted Height. Their *Talmud* that has been commented upon by the modern Rabbins, has been ſhewn to be little older than the Age of *Juſtinian*, the firſt authentick Mention we have of the *Miſna*, or Text of that Book (for the *Gemara* or Comment muſt have been yet later) being in one of his Novels (*d*), and probably, the Contention among the *Jews* about receiving it, had given Occaſion

(*c*) *V. Peirin. l. 2. Exerc. 6. cap. 1. Exerc. 9. c. 8, &c.*

(*d*) *Novel* 145.

to

to that Law. *Origen* and St. *Jerome* knew nothing of that Book; who notwithſtanding were inquiſitive Men, and knowing in the *Hebrew*, and having had Opportunities of conſulting their *Hebrew* Maſters, and Occaſions of citing them, and having done it in Things of leſs Moment, could not have avoided mentioning this, had it been then in being, and ſo noted, as to be a ſtanding Law, Eccleſiaſtical and Civil, among the *Jews* (*e*). Their two Books *Bahir* and *Zohar*, ſo venerable among them for their mighty Age, have been brought down yet lower; tho' whatever Age they be of, they can be of no Uſe to any, being only a Heap of Cabbaliſtical Niceties (*f*), which, though much valued by ſuch Men, as admire every thing that is abſtruſe and hidden, are ſufficiently known to be nothing better than Jargon and Cant. The Truth of it is, few of their ancient Books have been thought much better, being either ſo myſtical, as hardly to be underſtood, or ſo full of groſs Legend, as to force them to take ſhelter under Allegories to reconcile them

(*e*) *Morin. ibid. Exerc.* 6.

(*f*) *Buxtorf. Bibl. Rab.*

to Senſe. There is little Light to be borrowed from them, for almoſt a thouſand Years after the laſt Deſtruction of their Temple; and tho' about that Time, ſome of the modern Rabbins began to introduce Learning, yet this was no Part of their Rabbiniſm, but a departing therefrom; moſt of the Learning they had was borrowed from the *Arabians*; and *Maimonides*, *Qui primus inter ſuos deſit nugari*, by mixing Philoſophy and Reaſon with his Comments, in order to make their Books ſpeak Senſe, thereby gave ſuch Offence, that he was continually perſecuted for it by his Brethren (*g*), and hardly eſcaped being branded for a Heretick. They that have taken the ſame Way, ought upon their Principles to fall under the like Cenſure; and it ought always to be remembered, that the modern Rabbins have done beſt, whoſe Authority by their Age is inconſiderable, and their Skill not ſo extraordinary, as to need be imitated by Chriſtians, who now underſtand their Language as well, and their Critical and Philological Learning much better than they

(*g*) *Buxtorf Præf. in Mor. Nevoch.*

they do themſelves. Even *Maimonides* (*h*) confeſſeth of his Times, that the *Jews* were not then ſkilful in their own Language.

(*h*) *Mor. Nevoch. Par.* 1. *cap.* 67.

I AM not ignorant with what Deſign ſome Men have decry'd the Rabbins: Whatever their Deſign may have been, they may have ſpoke Truth, and at the ſame time miſtake their Aim; We have the leſs Reaſon to be jealous of them, ſince they are not the only Men that have gone this Way: For to paſs by *Luther*, who has treated the Rabbins very ruggedly (*i*), let us hear what a great Profeſſer, *Reuchlin*'s Scholar and Succeſſor, ſays of them, one who had ſpent all his Life, and Part of his Eſtate in theſe Studies (*k*): In his Preface to the Dictionary (one of the firſt conſiderable ones of this Kind) he gives this Account; "In them is no Light, no "Knowledge of God, no Spirit, no "true and ſolid Art, no Underſtanding "even of the *Hebrew* Tongue—They "have done nothing worth Notice to-

(*i*) *In Gen. cap.* 16, *&c.*

(*k*) *Joh. Forſterus.*

"wards

" wards underſtanding the ſacred Text: " Their Dictionaries and Comments have " brought more Obſcurity than Light " or Truth." — And then goes on to challenge them in Matter of Fact, and to point out a better Way than that which they have followed, and ſuch as himſelf has purſued.

HE may have gone too far in depreſſing the Rabbins; if he has been too warm in decrying them, doubtleſs others have gone too great a Length the other Way, who have ſtudied the *Talmud* ſo long as to draw Contagion from thence, and almoſt become Rabbins themſelves. A Countryman of our own has exceeded in this, who, though he has only commented upon one Book, has had ſuch Faith in the *Talmud*, as to believe, " That many of its Traditions were " divinely delivered to *Moſes* in Mount " *Sinai*, which it was not lawful for " *Moſes* to divulge in Writing; but be- " ing tranſmitted down orally to his " Poſterity, they are related to us in " the

" the *Talmudic* Books (*l*)." And leaſt this ſhould not be enough, he is of Opinion, " There are many allegorical and " pious Sayings contained there, that " were uttered by the ancient Rabbins, " when heated with the Divinity, and " moved by God." Could any *Jew* have ſaid more? Or could it be imagin'd, a Chriſtian would have ſaid ſo much? If theſe be the Fruits of Rabbinical Inquiries, ſurely they are better let alone. That a Man that is converſant in theſe ſort of Studies ſhould undervalue all other ſorts of Learning, is no new Thing; it is what has been obſerved, and for which a Reaſon may be given: For theſe Inquiries being out of the Way, and not every Man's Poſſeſſion, vulgar Studies muſt be deſpiſed by Men of uncommon Attainments, and thoſe only valued that are difficult and uncommon. Or that others ſhould imagine they find Eloquence in the Rabbins, and ſhould compare *Abravanel* to *Cicero*, and *Aben-Ezra* to *Saluſt* (*m*), is not very ſtrange; for Men are apt to find Beauties in Blemiſhes, where they have placed

(*l*) *V. Præf. ad Cod. Joma. Multa Allegorica & pia dicta, quæ Antiqui Rabbini à Deo ex agitati ejuſq; numine abrepti protulerunt, in ſcriptis Talmudicis continentur.* ibid.

(*m*) *Sim. Crit. Hiſt. l. 3. c. 7.*

placed their Affections: But that Men ſhould proceed to idolize them, no other Reaſon can be aſſigned, but that which is given for all Idols, and that is, That they are all of them vain.

BECAUSE the Rabbins have been ſaid to have borrowed moſt of their human Learning from the *Arabians*, I will likewiſe ſpeak one Word of them. As the *Jews* have borrowed from the *Arabians*, ſo have the *Arabians* from the *Greeks*. For they were ſo far from having any Learning of their own, that the true *Arabs*, the Deſcendants of *Iſhmael*, had no Letters; and their Language muſt have been loſt, had it not been preſerved in their Poems, that were compoſed by their ancient *Bards (n)*, and by their Facility, being eaſily learnt, were delivered down from hand to hand. Other Learning they had very little, except Poetry, till having over-run the *Eaſtern* Parts of the *Greek* Empire, they were taught it by the vanquiſh'd People, who tranſlated the *Greek* Authors for them into their own Language; and the *Arabians*

(n) *Pocock ad Spec. Arab.*

bians being Men of quick Wits; refined ſo much upon their Authors, that *Ariſtotle* became more ſubtle in the *Arabick*, than he was before in his own Tongue; and ſo much was he admired in that Dreſs, that he was turned from thence into *Latin*, with *Averroes* upon him; and for ſome Time one was not thought to underſtand *Ariſtotle* aright, unleſs he had read him with *Averroes*'s Comment. But this Humour held no longer than *Averroes* came to be underſtood, (underſtood I ſhould not have ſaid, for perhaps no Man ever underſtood him, but till he came to be better looked into) for then his over-great Nicety was not only diſcovered; but beſide other Errors, he was charged with the Whimſies and Viſions of the *Alcoran* (*o*): And *Averroes* is now as much out of Faſhion for his Philoſophy, as *Avicen* is for his Phyſick, though they were once the Wonder of their Age and Nation.

(*o*) *Lud. Viv. de Cauſ. Corrupt. Art. Lib.* 5.

PHYSICK and Philoſophy were the Studies wherein the *Arabians* excelled moſt, and therefore the Books of that Kind were

were firſt tranſlated and publiſhed among us: But ſince thoſe Books have ceaſed to be admired, an Attempt has been made another way, and we have been furniſhed with a Set of *Arabick* Hiſtorians, by *Erpenius*, *Golius*, and Dr. *Pocock*. Their Books may be ſeen, and containing Matter of Fact, every Man is able to judge of their Performance: What ſort of Hiſtorian *Abulpharaijus* is, may be inferred from his learned Editor, who was under Diſcouragements in publiſhing him, from his Diſagreement with *Greek* and *Roman* Hiſtory. I am ſure *Eutychius* is no better, (whom Mr. *Selden* is pleaſed to ſtile our *Ægyptian Bede*:) His Hiſtory of the Council of *Nice* is ſuch a Romance, as exceeds all Faith, but that of a *Rabbin* or *Arabian* (*p*). According to him, above two thouſand Biſhops met at *Nice*: After they had been above two Years in aſſembling there, the Patriarch of *Alexandria* is appointed Preſident, and no more Notice taken of *Hoſius*, than if he had not been preſent: *Conſtantine* is deſcribed as transferring his Power upon the Biſhops by the Delivery of his Ring,

(*p*.) *Eutych. p.* 44, *&c.*

Sword, and Scepter, with other Things equally abſurd: And that the Canons might bear better Proportion to the Number of Biſhops, in the *Arabick* Copies we have above a Hundred (*q*); whereas all the World knows there are only Twenty genuine Canons of that Council.

(*q*) *V. Abr. Ecchel. Eutych. Vind. Par.* 2. *c.* 17.

We have been told oftner than once of *Livy* compleat in *Arabick*, yet dormant among their Manuſcripts: But if their Tranſlations be no better than their Hiſtories, (and if we will take *Huetius*'s (*r*) Account of them, they are rather worſe) we have no Reaſon to deſire it over-eagerly, though it could be produced, which I almoſt deſpair it ever ſhall. Nor have we Reaſon to be more fond of their Geography, if we may make an Eſtimate from that Taſte thereof, which has been given us by *Gabriel Sionita*, in the *Nubian Geographer*, who has reliſhed ſo little with the World, as not to raiſe any Thirſt or Appetite of having more. With what Exactneſs he has deſcribed the three Parts of the World,

(*r*) *De Clar. Interpr.* p. 121.

World, particularly *Europe*, might be eaſily ſhewn, were it worth the while to trace him in his Failings: He is to be ſeen, and every one that has a Globe and Maps, can judge of the Work.

IN one Word; the great Uſe of the *Arabian* and *Rabbinical* Writers ſeems to be, in confuting the *Alcoran* and *Talmud*; and to that End there is no Doubt they may be effectually uſeful.

CHAP. XVIII.

Of SCHOLASTICK LEARNING.

DIVINITY, as it is profeſſed in the Schools, is become an Art, and ſo profound a Piece of Learning, that it requires great Parts and much Pains to maſter it; an Argument ſure, that it is not ſo very neceſſary, otherwiſe it would need leſs Skill to be underſtood. I would not detract from, much leſs deny all Uſe of this ſort of Learning, tho' if I ſhould be free in my Cenſures, I ſhould have good Authority to warrant me therein; moſt of the firſt Reformers having led the Way, and ſome of them having declaimed againſt it

it pretty warmly. Its great Abuſe in the Church of *Rome* had given too juſt Occaſion to this; for that Church having adopted it into her Syſtems, and interwoven it with moſt of her Opinions, and the Schoolmen having been the great Champions of her Cauſe, the Reformers were never ſafe, till they had diſarmed her of this Hold, which they did by expoſing this new Method, and introducing in its Stead a much ſurer one, built upon the clear Text of Scripture, and Deductions from thence, which they made uſe of in all their Conferences and Diſputations. This, though the true and ancient Way, and moſt agreeable to the Simplicity of the Goſpel, yet had been much neglected by the Schoolmen, who having broached new Opinions, were to ſupport them by new Methods, and the Scriptures having been ſilent, or not ſpeaking home to their Purpoſe, they therefore uſed them very ſparingly: The Authority of the Fathers was called in, and where theſe were deficient, *Ariſtotle*'s Philoſophy was to ſupply the Defect (without whom, if the Obſervation

in my Author (*f*) be true, a Neighbouring Church had wanted ſome Articles of Faith;) the Fathers and Philoſophical Reaſons were their greater Strength. Tho', after all, it muſt be confeſſed, that where the Opinions of their Church have not been concerned, and where they have argued barely upon the Principles of Reaſon, they have often done exceeding well: Only launching out beyond their Line, they have as frequently miſcarried.

(*f*) *In che haveva gran parte Ariſtotele, coli haver diſtinto Eſſatta mente tutti generi di cauſa; a che ſe egli noa foſſe adoperato noi mancavano di molti articoli di fede. Hiſt. del Conc. Trident. l. 2.*

THE Faults in this ſort of Learning are chiefly theſe: (1.) Defectiveneſs for want of proper Helps. (2.) Incoherence. (3.) Nicety. (4.) Obſcurity. (5.) Barbarity. (1.) The Languages are one proper Help; for *Ariſtotle*'s Philoſophy, and many of the Fathers being writ in *Greek*, it was neceſſary, in order to be maſter of theſe, that the Language wherein they were writ ſhould be underſtood: This Help the Schoolmen wanted, having had no *Greek*, and only a very moderate Share of *Latin*: *Ariſtotle* was known to them in a Tongue that was none of his own, and being obſcure enough

enough in himſelf, was much more ſo in wretched Tranſlations; and the Fathers, who were very intelligible in *Greek*, were either obſcured, by being turned into another Idiom, or were made to ſpeak ſomewhat they never meant. Both *Greek* and *Latin* Fathers have been treated equally ill, for want of another proper Help, *viz. Criticiſm*, in diſtinguiſhing genuine from ſpurious Authors; for want of which, Authorities have been crudely ſwallowed down without Diſtinction; falſe Authorities have been obtruded, and true ones rejected, or often mutilated; the Age of Authors have been confounded, and ſome late Impoſtor has aſſumed the Name of a venerable Father. Inſtances whereof (for I do not love to dwell upon Sores) may be had in *Launoy* in ſeveral of his Epiſtles, and in *Danæus*'s Cenſure upon the firſt Book of Sentences.

(2.) BY Incoherence I do not mean any Inconſequence in the Way of Arguing in the Divinity of the Schools, but a Diſagreement of the Parts, that it prin-

cipally conſiſts of; which being chiefly two (as we have before obſerved) the Sentences of the Fathers, and *Ariſtotle*'s Philoſophy, what tolerable Agreement can there be betwixt two Things ſo very different? Moſt of the Fathers were *Platoniſts* in their Opinion, poſſibly for the ſake of ſome Agreement which that Philoſophy ſeemed to have with the Chriſtian Religion: *Origen*, St. *Chryſoſtom*, and to name no more, St. *Auguſtine*, who was more followed in the Schools than all the reſt, was of that Number: *Ariſtotle* was either much neglected by the Fathers, or where they had Occaſion to ſpeak of him, they uſually condemn him; and that either for his ſophiſtick way of Reaſoning, or for his unſuitable Notions of God and Providence, which are of the firſt Conſideration in the Schools. Even in the Church of *Rome*, *Ariſtotle* was often forbid, ſometimes ordered to be burnt; and what is moſt ſtrange, at that Time when his Books were commented upon by *Aquinas*, they ſtood prohibited by a Decree of *Gregory* IX. (*g*). Of late, almoſt

(*g*) *V. Launoy de var. Ariſtot. Fortuna. cap.* 7, &c.

moſt in our Time, a Propoſal was made at *Rome* to *Gregory* XIV. that *Ariſtotle*'s Philoſophy might be baniſhed the Schools, and *Plato*'s ſubſtituted in his Place, as being more agreeable to the Chriſtian Religion, and Senſe of the Fathers; and above forty Propoſitions were then produced, wherein *Plato*'s Conſonancy was ſhewn; in all which *Ariſtotle* was pretended *(b)* to be diſſonant from the true Religion: Whether upon juſt Grounds or no, I will not venture to determine; for ſince Platoniſm has obtained, as it once did pretty early, and has again done of late, it has been found liable to as dangerous Conſequences, as any that have been yet charged upon the other Philoſophy. I only bring thus much to ſhew, that there can be no good Agreement in this Particular, where the Parts are of ſo different a Nature, as the Fathers and *Ariſtotle*, and ſo jarring, that they cannot naturally cohere.

(b) *Ibid. cap.* 14.

(3.) NICETY is the great Fault of the Schools; her Doctors have been ſtiled, *Profound*, *Subtle*, *Irrefragable*; Titles which

which they have moſt valued themſelves upon, and ſeem not much to have affected the Reputation of being Familiar and Eaſy, at leaſt none of their Titles have been derived from thence. They delight in refining upon one another, and ſometimes ſpin ſo fine a Thread, that it is either broke, or much weakened in drawing it out: They have perplexed Knowledge, by ſtarting inſuperable Difficulties, and ſeem in this to have run into the ſame Fault with your too profound Politicians, who, as they have often foreſeen Deſigns, which are neither practicable, nor ever intended; ſo theſe Men have propoſed Objections that would never have been thought of, had not they firſt ſtarted them; the Conſequence whereof has been, that we have furniſhed our Enemies with Objections, who have made uſe of our Weapons, and have turned our Artillery againſt us. This is too viſible in our modern *Socinians*, who have often gathered out of this Store-houſe, and by picking up Difficulties in the Schoolmen, have turned their Objections into Proof and Arguments,

ments, and have thereby gained the Reputation of ſubtle Men. Thus Controverſies have been multiplied, and thoſe we have already, have ſwoln to an unmeaſurable Height, and every Difference has become irreconcileable; whilſt Men ſtudy Nicety more than Peace, and ſtretch their Wits, and rack their Inventions, to out-reach their Opponents. And it were well if the Miſchief had ſtopt here, and Mens Curioſity had not led them on, from nice Queſtions to ſuch as are impious: It has done this; and leaſt I ſhould be thought to do them wrong, I ſhall refer the Reader to an unexceptionable Author *(b)*, one of the greateſt Champions the Church of *Rome* ever had, for a Catalogue of them; which are ſo offenſive to Chriſtian Ears, that I forbear to put them down in *Engliſh*, though he has not ſcrupled to give them in a more common Language.

(b) *Card. Perron. de L'Euchar. l.* 3. *c.* 20.

(4.) OBSCURITY, where Things are intricate in themſelves, if they be not ſo clearly explained in treating of them as might be deſired, the Nature of the

the Things will excuſe, as not being capable of Perſpicuity; or if hard Terms are made uſe of, if very ſignificative, and not too many, this is what is allowable in all Arts: But then, if Terms of Art have been multiplied beyond Neceſſity, and without Significancy; or if Things that are plain in themſelves have been obſcured, by being handled too artificially, this ſure is a great Abuſe; and this is what has been charged upon many of the Schoolmen. The Myſteries of Religion are not capable of being rendered obvious to Reaſon, and therefore if they have not made theſe plain, they are not to be blamed; they would have been more excuſable, had they explained them leſs, and had not truſted too much to rational Helps in explaining Things that are not the Objects of our Underſtanding. But tho' Myſteries are not to be explained, other Things in Religion are clear enough and would continue ſo, were they not clouded and involved by too much Art. I do not charge this as a general Fault, though it be too common; ſome of the Schoolmen are leſs obnoxious to this Charge,

Charge, and generally the firſt are leaſt obſcure; and *Lombard* and *Aquinas*, the two Authors of the *Sentences* and *Sums*, have been more plain than any of thoſe that have writ upon them, whoſe Comments have often helpt to obſcure the Text. It is an odd Commendation that is given by *Cardan* (*k*) to one of our Countrymen, one of the moſt ſubtle among the Doctors, that only one of his Arguments was enough to puzzle all Poſterity; and that when he grew old, he wept becauſe he could not underſtand his own Books. Men that write *De Subtilitate*, muſt be allowed to ſay what they pleaſe; but thoſe of ordinary Capacities would have thought it a greater Character, that our Doctor had well explained that one Argument, and had writ ſo, that he might have been underſtood. There are great Charms in being eſteemed ſubtle; and it is an Argument hereof, that *Cardan* commends this Author for his Subtilty, whom in all probability, he had never ſeen; otherwiſe he could not ſo foully have miſtaken his Name,

(*k*) *De Subtil. l.* 16.

(l) *Rich. al. Raymund Suiſeth. Venet.* 1520, *ap. Cardan. Johan. etc.*

Name, as he does *(l)*, and as ſome others have done, that have ſpoke of this Author, who is very rare. He is indeed profoundly obſcure; though, I muſt confeſs, I have only looked into him ſo far, as to obſerve his Way of writing, which is really ſuch, as if he never meant to be underſtood. Others have been faulty enough in this Way, and it were no hard Taſk to ſhew it in many of the reſt, but having mentioned this Man, I can ſay nothing worſe againſt Obſcurity.

(5.) ROUGH Language and Barbarouſneſs of Expreſſion, that were made ſo great Objections upon the reviving of Learning, and are yet ſo with polite Men, whoſe Ears can bear nothing without Ornament and Smoothneſs, ſhall be no great Faults with me, and in abſtruſe Subjects may be borne with; and I ſhould digeſt *Caramuel*'s new Scholaſtick Dialect, provided it conduced to promote Knowledge: However, a bad Dreſs and ill Men are Blemiſhes upon Knowledge, tho' they detract nothing from its Strength,

Strength, and ought to be ſome Mortification to thoſe Men who are apt to overvalue themſelves upon imaginary Perfection. Of all Men they are farther from it; and after ſo many Imperfections as have been charged upon them, it was ſurpriſing to me to meet with one of the laſt Commentators upon the *Sum (m)* writing as if he had liv'd before *Luther*. In a Prefatory Diſcourſe entitled, *Commendatio Doctrinæ D. Thomæ*, he endeavours to prove in ſo many ſeveral Chapters, that St. *Thomas* had writ his Books, not without ſpecial Infuſion of God Almighty. *Chap.* 1. That in writing them, he received many Things by Revelation. *Chap.* 2. That all he writ was without Error. *Chap.* 4. That Chriſt had given Teſtimony to his Writings. *Chap.* 6. And to ſhew of how near the ſame Authority St. *Thomas*'s *Sum* is to the Holy Scriptures, he aſſures us, That as in the firſt General Councils, it was uſual to have the Holy Bible laid open upon the Altar, as the Rule of their Proceedings; ſo in the laſt General Council (which with them is the Council

(m) *Bapt. Gonet. Clyp. Theo. log. Par.* 1669.

of *Trent*,) St. *Thomas*'s *Sum* was placed with the Bible upon the ſame Altar, as another inferior Rule of Chriſtian Doctrine. *Chap.* 8. Which is very agreeable to what has been writ by a Jeſuit (*n*) upon the ſame Subject, That all the General Councils that have been held ſince St. *Thomas* lived, have taken the Opinions they defined from his Doctrine. It were needleſs after this to cite the Elogy of another Jeſuit (*o*), where St. *Thomas* is ſtiled an Angel, and that as he learnt many Things from the Angels, ſo he taught the Angels ſome Things: That St. *Thomas* had ſaid, what St. *Paul* was not ſuffered to utter: That he ſpeaks of God as if he had ſeen him, and of Chriſt, as if he had been his Voice; and more to this Effect.

(*n*) *Tanner Quæſt.* 1. *Dub.* 2.

(*o*) *Peter Labbé ap. Gomet. ibid.*

When ſuch bold Expreſſions are openly vented, it is Time to look about us, and it concerns every Man to endeavour to give a Check to ſuch daring Aſſertions. I am far from detracting either from the Knowledge or Holineſs of St. *Thomas*, which doubtleſs were both extraordinary; but

but when a mortal Man is equalled to the Angels in Heaven, and ſuch Elogies given him, as, if he were capable of hearing, he muſt bluſh to receive; it is Juſtice to him, to reſcue him from falſe and undue Praiſes. To do him Right, he has improved natural Reaſon to an uncommon Height, and many of thoſe Proofs of a God, and Providence, and natural Religion, that have been advanced of late, as new Arguments, with ſo much Applauſe, have been borrowed from him or other Schoolmen; and are only not his, by being put in a new Dreſs, and ſometimes in a worſe Method. Had it been his Fortune to have lived in a happier Age, under better Opportunities, and with thoſe Helps that we now enjoy, he muſt have made a greater *Genius* than many of thoſe who are now look'd upon with Wonder.

CHAP. XIX.

The CONCLUSION.

AND now having gone through the ſeveral Sorts of Learning, and obſerved the various Defects, and oft-times Uncertainties, which they are ſubject to; the Concluſion is obvious; That ſince no compleat Satisfaction is to be met with from them, we are to ſeek for it ſomewhere elſe, if happily it may be found. It may be found, but not in our own Powers, or by our own Strength; and that which our moſt exalted Reaſon, under all its Improvements, cannot yield us, is only to be had from Revelation. It is there we may ſecurely reſt, after the

the Mind has tried all other Ways and Methods of Knowledge, and has tired itſelf with fruitleſs Inquiries. It is with the Mind, as with the Will and Appetites; for as after we have tried a thouſand Pleaſures, and turned from one Enjoyment to another, we find no Reſt to our Deſires, till we at laſt fix them upon the Sovereign Good: So in purſuit of Knowledge, we meet with no tolerable Satisfaction to our Minds, till after we are wearied with tracing other Methods, we turn them at laſt upon the One Supreme and Unerring Truth. And were there no other Uſe of human Learning, there is at leaſt this in it: That by its many Defects, it brings the Mind to a Senſe of its own Weakneſs, and makes it more readily, and with greater Willingneſs, ſubmit to Revelation. God may have ſo ordered it in his wiſe Providence, thereby to keep us in a conſtant Dependence upon Himſelf, and under a Neceſſity of conſulting him in his Word; which ſince profane Men treat ſo neglectfully already, they would have it in greater Contempt; and it

would be much more vile in their Eyes, did they find any thing within them equally perfect, which might guide them in their Courſe, and bring them to the Haven, where they would be. But this ſince they do not meet with, it ought to wean them from an Opinion of themſelves, and incline them to ſeek out Satisfaction ſomewhere elſe, and to take ſhelter where it may be found.

I HAVE ſaid nothing in this whole Diſcourſe (nor can I repeat it too often) with Deſign to diſcredit human Learning; I am neither of their Mind (*a*) who were for burning all Books, except their Bibles; nor of that learned Man's Opinion, who thought the Principles of all Arts and Sciences might be borrowed from that Store-houſe; I would willingly put a juſt Value upon the one, without depreſſing the other: But where Men laſh out the other Way, and take the Liberty to exalt Learning to the Prejudice of Religion, and to oppoſe ſhallow Reaſon to Revelation, it is then Time, and every Man's Buſineſs, to endeavour

(*a*) Anabaptiſts *in* Germany.

deavour to keep it under, at leaſt to prevent its aſpiring; by not ſuffering it to paſs its due Bounds. Our Reaſon is the proper Guide in our Inquiries, and is to be followed, where it keeps within its Sphere; but ſhining dimly, it muſt borrow Rays from the Fountain of Light, and muſt always act ſubordinately to Revelation. Whenever it croſſeth that, it is out of its Sphere, and indeed contradicts its own Light; for nothing is more reaſonable, than to believe a Revelation, as being grounded upon God's Veracity, without which even Reaſon itſelf will be often doubting. That whatever God (who is Truth itſelf) reveals, is true, is as ſure and evident a Propoſition, as any we can think of: It is certain in its Ground, and evident in its Connexion, and needs no long Conſequences to make it out; whereas moſt of our rational Deductions are often both weakly bottomed, and depending upon a long Train of Conſequences, which are to be ſpun from one another, their Strength is often loſt, and the

Thread broken, before we come at the Concluſion.

And though it be commonly objected, that there are as many Differences concerning Divine Truths, as about thoſe of Nature; yet I think there needs nothing farther to be ſaid to this, but that Men would approach Divine Truths with the ſame Diſpoſitions, that are required by Philoſophers to the reading of their Writings, and the Objection would ſoon fall to the Ground. The beſt Philoſophers require, that in reading their Books, we ſhould lay aſide Partiality to a Party, all Paſſion and other Prejudice; and let Men only approach the Scriptures with the ſame Preparations of Mind, and with theſe and ordinary Grace (that is never wanting to thoſe that ſeek it) I dare be confident they will have no Reaſon to complain of Obſcurity or Ambiguity in thoſe Sacred Writings: With theſe Helps (that are had by aſking) the weakeſt and moſt ordinary Capacity ſhall ſee enough, and ſhall not ſtand in need of deep Reach

or

or Penetration, which are neceſſary to the underſtanding of Natural Truths. God, who would have all Men happy, has likewiſe made them all ſo far wiſe, and has ſo ordered, that the moſt important Truths, ſhould be the moſt eaſy and common; and it can be no Objection, that to the underſtanding of them, we muſt make uſe of ordinary Means, and muſt come prepared with ſuitable Diſpoſitions: This is what is neceſſary in all other Things; for every thing is beſt underſtood by the ſame Spirit by which it is writ.

GOD has gone yet farther with us: Neceſſary Truths are not only the moſt Common, but he has likewiſe made them the moſt Convincing, and has given them a Power, that is not eaſily reſiſted. Rational Arguments, however convincing they may ſeem, are uſually repelled by Reaſon; and it is hard to convince a Man by ſuch Methods, that is equally Maſter of Reaſon with ourſelves: Whereas Divine Truths make their own Way, they act upon us with a ſecret

Power, and preſs the Mind with an almoſt irreſiſtible Strength, and do not only perſwade, but almoſt force an Aſſent: The firſt only act like Light, the other ſtrike down and pierce us through like Lightning. We have as remarkable a paſſage to this Purpoſe *(b)*, as moſt in Eccleſiaſtical Story; which though well atteſted, yet were it only a Parable, the Moral of it might be of good Uſe. Upon the convening of the firſt General Council at *Nice*, and the appearing of the Chriſtian Biſhops there, ſeveral of the Heathen Philoſophers offered themſelves among the Sons of God, intending to ſignalize themſelves upon ſo great an Occaſion, by attacking the Faith in its moſt eminent Profeſſors, and by endeavouring to overthrow it by Philoſophy and Reaſon. To this End ſeveral Conferences were held upon the Principles of Reaſon, by the moſt noted Men of their Party; in which one of the Philoſophers more forward than the reſt, begun to grow inſolent upon a ſuppoſed Advantage, and muſt needs triumph before Victory: An aged Biſhop took fire at

(*b*) *Sozom. Hiſt. l.* 1. *c.* 18. *Ruffin. Hiſt. l.* 1. *c.* 3.

at this, one who had been a Confeſſor in the late Perſecution, and was more noted for his Faith than Learning: Philoſophy he had none, but encounters his Adverſary in a new Manner, in the Name of *Jeſus*, and by the Word of God, and with a few plain Weapons drawn from thence, he humbles the Pride of this arrogant Philoſopher, and ſtraightway leads him captive to the Font: All the Reply our Philoſopher had left him, was, That while he was encountred by Philoſophy and human Learning, he defended himſelf the ſame Way; but being attacked by higher Reaſons, it was neceſſary for him to yield himſelf up to the Power of God. Such is the Force of that Word, which ſimple vain Men ſo much contemn.

WHAT then muſt we do? Are we to give ourſelves up to this Word, and lay aſide all human Learning? I am far from thinking ſo, and have already cautioned againſt any ſuch wild and Anabaptiſtical Conceit; theſe two may well conſiſt. Learning is of good Uſe in explaining

plaining this Word, and the Word ſerves very well to leſſen our Opinion of human Learning: The former may be ſerviceable whilſt it acts miniſterially and in ſubſervience to the latter; but being only a Hand-maid to Religion, whenever it uſurps upon that, it is to be kept down and taught its Duty: It is ſtill only human Learning that is very weak and very defective; and after all the great Things that can be ſaid of it, and the Uſes that may be aſſigned it, it muſt after all be confeſſed that our Bible is our beſt Book, and the only Book that can afford any true and ſolid Satisfaction: It is that which ſatisfies and never ſatiates; which the Deeper it is look'd into, pleaſeth the more, as containing new and hid Treaſures, by the opening whereof there always ſprings up in the Mind freſh Pleaſure and new Deſire: Whereas human Writings (like all human Things) cloy by their Continuance; and we can ſcarce read them the ſecond Time without Irkſomeneſs, and oft-times not without nauſeating thoſe fine

Things

Things that pleaſe ſo wonderfully at the firſt reading,

THE Sum of all is this, we buſy ourſelves in the Search of Knowledge, we tire out our Thoughts, and waſte our Spirits in this Purſuit, and afterwards flatter ourſelves with mighty Acquirements, and fill the World with Volumes of our Diſcoveries: Whereas would we take as much Pains in diſcovering our Weakneſs and Defects, as we ſpend Time in Oſtentation of our Knowledge, we might, with half the Time and Pains, ſee enough to ſhew us our Ignorance; and might thereby learn truer Wiſdom. We frame to ourſelves new Theories of the World, and pretend to meaſure the Heavens by our Mathematical Skill (that is, Indefinite Space by a Compaſs, or Span) whilſt we know little of the Earth we tread on, and every thing puzzles us that we meet with there. We live upon the Earth, and moſt Men think they reſt upon it; and yet it is a very difficult Queſtion in Philoſophy, Whether the Earth Reſts or

Moves:

Moves: And is it not very wonderful that we ſhould be ſuch Strangers to the Place of our Abode, as to know Nothing, whether we reſt there, or travel a daily Circuit of ſome Thouſand Miles? We rack our Inventions to find out Natural Reaſons for a Deluge of Waters, by fetching down Comets from above, and cracking the *Cortex* of the Earth to furniſh out ſufficient Stores for that Purpoſe; and yet from the *Convexity* of the Waters and Subſidence of the Shore in ſo many Places, it is hard to account in the Courſe of Nature, why there ſhould not be ſome Deluge every Day: And perhaps Providence is the ſureſt Bar, that has ſet Bounds to the Waters which they ſhall not paſs. We are not only puzzled by Things without us, but we are Strangers to our own Make and Frame: For tho' we are convinced that we conſiſt of Soul and Body, yet no Man hitherto has ſufficiently deſcribed the Union of theſe two, or has been able to explain, how Thought ſhould move Matter; or how Matter ſhould act upon Thought: Nay, the moſt minute Things in Nature, if

duly

duly conſidered, carry with them the greateſt Wonder, and perplex us as much as Things of greater Bulk and Shew. And yet we, who know ſo little in the ſmalleſt Matters, talk of nothing leſs than New *Theories of the World*, and *vaſt Fields of Knowledge*; buſying ourſelves in natural Inquiries, and flattering ourſelves with the wonderful Diſcoveries and mighty Improvements that have been made in human Learning, a great Part of which are purely imaginary; and at the ſame Time neglecting the only true and ſolid and ſatisfactory Knowledge. Things that are obſcure and intricate we purſue with Eagerneſs, whilſt Divine Truths are uſually diſregarded, only becauſe they are eaſy and common: Or if there be ſome of an higher Nature, they ſhall poſſibly be rejected, becauſe they are above, or ſeemingly contrary to Reaſon, whilſt we admit ſeveral other Things without Scruple which are not reconcileable with Revelation; though revealed Truth be certainly Divine; and the other, either no Truths at all, or at the beſt, only Human.

This

This ſort of Conduct is very prepoſterous; for, after all, true Wiſdom and ſatisfactory Knowledge is only to be had from Revelation; and as to other Truths which are to be collected from Senſe and Reaſon, our Ignorance of them will always be ſo much greater than our Knowledge, as there are a Thouſand Things we are ignorant of, to One Thing that we thoroughly know.

FINIS.

MVSEVM
BRITANNICVM